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The Dugan, Harkins, and Rogers Family Founders of Holy Trinity Church, Zanesville

by Donald M. Schlegel

Mrs. Elizabeth or Betty Dugan, her husband Thomas, and their family came to Amercia from County Donegal, Ireland, in 1792. They were among the vanguard of settlers in the Irish Catholic community at Buffalo Creek in what is now Butler and Armstrong counties, Pennsylvania. After some twenty-five years in Pennsylvania, many of the Dugans moved west to Zanesville, Ohio, where, together with Father Nicholas Young, they founded the Catholic parish. From Zanesville, within a few decades they spread across the width of the American continent, most of them carrying with them the Faith that had been brought to Ireland by St. Patrick and established in Ohio by the saintly Father Fenwick.

Buffalo Creek Settlement

The core group of settlers of Buffalo Creek, all natives of County Donegal, left Ireland from the port of Derry on June 4, 1792 and arrived in New Castle, Delaware on September 9. Within two years they proceeded to Indian Creek Settlement in Fayette County. The route most of them took to the western frontier followed part of the road opened by General Braddock in his expedition against Fort Duquesne in 1755. It crossed the mountains from Cumberland, Maryland to the Yohioghenny River and went down that river to Mr. Stewart's Crossing, near

the present Connelsville, and on to the mouth of Jacob's Creek. The majority settled in "the Neck," that part of northwestern Fayette County lying between the Youghioghenny River and Jacob's Creek. Some farmed there while others found employment four miles up Jacob's Creek at the Alliance blast furnace, the first of its nature west of the Alleghenies, which had been established in 1790.¹

In 1796, after Mad Anthony Wayne's defeat of the Indians at Fallen Timbers in the Ohio territory (1794) and the signing of the Greenville Treaty (1795), the majority of the Donegal Irish moved on. Their route was north past Greensburg to the Allegheny River at Freeport. Crossing the river at that point they traveled north, up Buffalo Creek. The first to arrive there were Charles Duffy, Thomas Dugan, John Dugan, John Forker, John Gillespie, Moses Hanlon, and P. McElroy. As more Irish pioneers arrived the settlement spread several miles to the north, west, and south. The settlement was also called Donegal, from the township name in Butler County, and Sugar Creek, from the name of the adjoining township in Armstrong County.

The only mode of travel to those remote parts at the time was by foot or pack-horse. The horses were used to bring in supplies such as salt and iron from more civilized parts of the country and to convey the settlers' products to market. These products, which brought in their meagre cash,

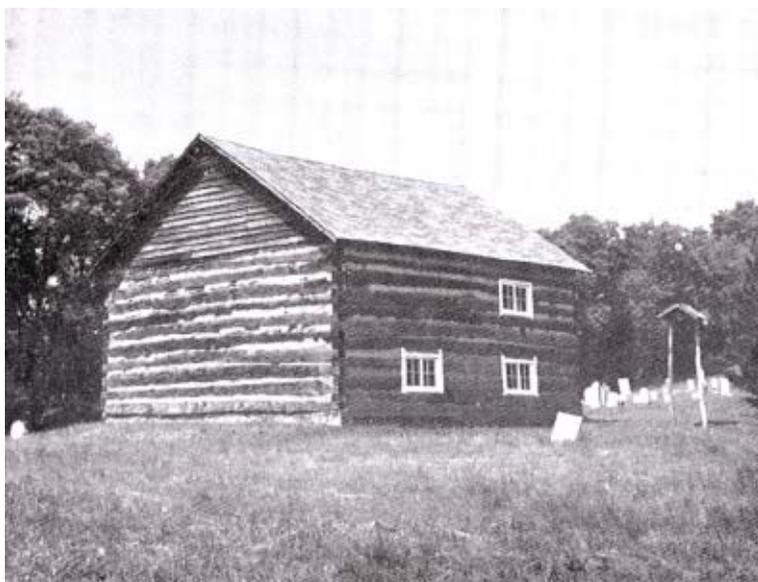
included beeswax, tallow, flax, and bags that were manufactured by the women of the settlement.²

A site in Donegal Township, Butler County, later called Maloney's Corners³ but in those early days owned by the Dugans, was the "rallying place" for the Irish settlers. Above the intersection the community's first cemetery was established and there also they built a small log cabin with a crude altar to serve as a church when a priest might visit. No priest visited until 1801, when a Father Lanigan stayed for a short while. The next to bring the sacraments was the German priest Father Heilbron, who came in 1803 and baptized thirty-eight persons. Because they could not understand this German priest very well, the settlers sent a petition to Bishop Carroll in Baltimore, asking for a priest whose language they could understand. Leading the list of signatories were Thomas Dugan, John Gillespie, Neal Dugan, and Michael Dugan. Also signing were John Dugan and Robert Harkins.

About 1804 a 200 acre farm was purchased for a church, using money advanced by one of the settlers. It is on one of the highest points in Armstrong County, in Sugar Creek Township, some twelve miles northwest of Kittanning and 1/2 mile east of the Butler County line. In

November of 1805 Connel Rogers, son-in-law of the Dugans, wrote a letter in which he mentioned that the congregation had bought the site but had not yet prepared it for a priest.⁴

In 1805 Rev. Laurence S. Phelan took up residence in the heart of the community. Overjoyed at having a priest in their midst, the heads of the families met to consider how to build a house and a church on the new site. The district was split into four quarters and one man was sent to collect funds in each quarter. Connel Rogers was assigned to canvas the northwestern quarter, or Donegal Township. At the same time, "one of the men, a tailor by profession, was planning the vestments."⁵ Perhaps this also was Connel Rogers, who was a tailor. Each of the four districts was responsible for funds or materials to construct one wall of the church. Logs were cut locally and boards for the more finished parts were hauled from a sawmill in Butler. In the spring of 1806 the church, measuring some 22 by 35 feet, was under roof and was dedicated to God under the invocation of St. Patrick, Apostle of Ireland. However, Mass was not offered there more often than once in one or two months, when the priest was present. Father Phelan left in 1810 and the community was dependent upon visiting priests until 1821.



St. Patrick's at Sugar Creek, repaired in 1926.

O'Dugan in Tír Chonaill

There was no well-known Dugan family in County Donegal or Tír Chonaill, as it was known to the Irish. The closest notable family of a similar name lived at Kilronan, Co. Roscommon. They were one of the great literary families of Ireland, professors of poetry, history, and music. Another family of Dugans lived in County Cork.

But where did the Donegal O'Dugans come from? One Ulster family of the name had lived centuries before in Magh Itha, the plain in County Donegal west of the River Foyle. This family, which was related to the later O'Neills, was driven east across the Foyle in the 12th century. There is no indication of how some of them may have returned to Tír Chonaill. Another O'Dugan family is said to have lived from time immemorial on Tory Island, off the northwest coast of Tír Chonaill. Dr. John O'Donovan, 19th century scholar, in his edition of the *Annals of the Four Masters* noted that he was given a very complete version of the ancient story of Balor of the Evil Eye by Shane O'Dugan, whose ancestor is said to have been living in Tory in the time of St. Columbkille, the 6th century.

There were a few Dugans in Tír Chonaill by

the early 17th century who had some social standing. In the spring of 1601 the government in Dublin issued a pardon to Niall Garbh O'Donnell, a member of the local noble family who had gone over to the government side against O'Neill and O'Donnell. The latter were fighting against the foreign, Protestant government for the Catholic faith and their own culture and independence. Among Niall Garbh O'Donnell's followers were Shane Croine, Hugh, Cormack, and Owen (son of William) O Dowgan. In 1610, after Earl Rory O'Donnell had fled from Ireland and Tír Chonaill was confiscated by the government to be planted with Scots and Englishmen, Murtaghe O Dowgan was slated to receive four balliboes or 64 acres of arable land. He was a native of the county and no doubt head of the small sept or tribe at that time. Natives were allotted land in Kilmacrenan Barony and at the rising of 1641 it was Hugh Doragh O'Dougan, Irish Papist, no doubt Murtaghe's heir, from whom lands in the parish of Clandhurka, Barony of Kilmacrenan, were taken. The Dugans were not numerous enough in 1659 to be mentioned in the "census" of that year in County Donegal.

"These pioneers were very primitive in their manners, as countless anecdotes related of them incontestably prove. They delighted in polemics, and if the priest found it necessary to refute some arguments of a minister of the sects, he need not be surprised to hear some elderly member of his flock enthusiastically exclaim, 'Well said, your reverence,' or some such token of approval. If he denounced intemperance or some other disorder in his flock, a patriarchal figure might be seen rising to point a significant finger at some one, with, 'That's for you; you were drunk last week. Listen to what his reverence is saying'"... The settlement had a "bard" who celebrated every memorable event in verse. If the schoolmaster vanquished some unfledged sectarian preacher, the fact was soon heard on every side. If the neighbors gathered at a frolic or raising and, having indulged too freely in strong spirits broke

the peace and perhaps someone's head, a song of commemoration immediately sprang from the bard's head. "But with simplicity of manners they had a purity of morals and firmness of faith which are the glory of the Irish people in whatever part of the world they are found; and an insult offered to religion by a sectarian, or a scandal brought upon it by one of their own communion, was the only unpardonable sin in their decalogue."⁶

Mrs. Dugan

Thomas and Elizabeth or Betty Dugan probably were natives of Templecrone Parish on Donegal's west coast. Their son-in-law was from Rutland Island in that parish. In addition, Mrs. John Gillespie, born Alice Dugan, one of their fellow immigrants, was born in that parish about 1765. Betty was born about the year 1747 in

County Donegal, where she and her family suffered for their holy Catholic faith. They came to America in 1792 and settled in Westmoreland County, Pa.⁷ This indicates that they followed the pattern of the majority of what became the Buffalo Creek settlers, first migrating to the Indian Creek Settlement, as described above, but apparently settling on the north side of Jacob's Creek, the county line, and so were in Westmoreland County. With many others they soon moved on to the Buffalo Creek settlement, where Thomas owned 400 acres of hilly and wooded land.

The records of Thomas, the Dugan patriarch, are few. He appears in the 1800 census. On September 27, 1803 he declared his intention of becoming a citizen of the United States before a court in Allegheny County and the next day he sponsored the similar declaration of his son Neal. The next spring, on March 1, 1804 he relinquished ownership of his real estate to his sons Peter, Michael, and Neal and gave his household furniture to his wife Betty.⁸ There seems to be no record of his death, which occurred between 1810 and 1818.

Although as an adult Mrs. Dugan and her family resided in the near-wilderness, deprived for a long time of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass and the Sacraments, being convinced that God would not desert her if she did not first desert Him, she was never known to have omitted the duties of prayer and of keeping the Sundays and Holy Days in the best manner she could. She thus kept alive the Faith in the minds of her children. In her sleep, one night, she heard the voice of the mother of the Macabees exhorting her children to die rather than to abandon the religion of their fathers. Her daily aspirations to heaven were that, through the intercession of the Queen of Heaven, God would hasten the time in which she could again kneel before the altar and assist at the Mass.

Mrs. Dugan's sons who moved to the vicinity of Zanesville in Ohio were John Simon Dugan who arrived in March of 1817, Peter, who

arrived that summer, Andrew, and Michael. One daughter was Elizabeth, the widow of Robert Harkins, who arrived with her nine children in February of 1818.⁹ Another daughter was Ann, wife of Connel Rogers, who kept taverns in Putnam and Zanesville.

About 1818 the pious and venerable mother of this family came west to live near them. The mother and her children were desirous of having a church and priest in their midst. It was said that upon the first visit of a priest to Zanesville, Mass was offered in her house, the first offered in that part of Ohio.¹⁰ Other sources say that Rev. Nicholas D. Young first visited in the spring of 1819 and offered Mass in John S. Dugan's Green Tree Tavern, implying that Betty Dugan lived with him. It was this son John Dugan who donated the use of the Zanesville warehouse that became the fourth Catholic church in Ohio, called Holy Trinity. The extended Dugan family, with William C. Colerick, James Culbertson, and a few others, under the leadership of John Dugan, cooperated with Father Young in this effort.¹¹ John and his niece's husband, Thomas Hughes, offered to pay the cost of erecting the first church, St. John the Evangelist, in 1825.¹² The good mother, Elizabeth Dugan, never ceased to go to the altar in Holy Trinity church, in its replacement St. John the Evangelist Church, and then in its replacement, the present St. Thomas Aquinas Church, to offer up her fervent prayers for the advancement of that holy religion which was her sole consolation. She had the happiness of beholding a large congregation gathering around her. Her great devotion was the holy rosary of the Blessed Virgin, and no day would find her without her rosary in her hands.

Mrs. Dugan died on the Feast of the Assumption, August 15, 1848, at the age of 101 years, having preserved her memory and her cheerfulness up until the last two hours.¹³

Thomas and Elizabeth Dugan had at least six sons and five daughters and Mrs. Dugan is said to have left nearly three hundred descendants at the time of her death.¹⁴ A few of today's

descendants of the Dugans have partial information regarding the early Zanesville generations of this family. We will attempt to bring all of the early part of that information together, along with much additional data. Seven children of Thomas and Elizabeth Dugan are known with certainty. Michael, Andrew G., Elizabeth Harkins, Ann Rogers, John S., and Peter all moved to Zanesville or that vicinity. Their son Neal Dugan remained in Pennsylvania. Alice Dugan O'Donnell is thought to be another daughter and Thomas Dugan a son; they both remained in Pennsylvania.

Our intention is to tell something here of those descendants of Elizabeth whose families came through Zanesville, down to those who were living at the time of her death, along with their younger siblings. A few others will be listed who are of special interest or who provide links among the various families. Those who were born by 1848 soon spread across the width of this great continent, to Indiana, Illinois, Iowa, Arkansas, Nebraska, Kansas, Oklahoma, Nevada, and California; one family moved to Florida, while others moved east to Massachusetts, New York, and the District of Columbia. It is remarkable that in this large, solidly Catholic family, no religious vocations have been noted.

Persons noted below as "Harkins heir" were named as heirs of Michael J. Harkins of Zanesville, who died in 1929, thus verifying a relationship. Those noted "McKinney cousin" were cousins named in the estate papers of Catherine McKinney of Zanesville in 1947.

I. Neal Dugan

Neal Dugan was named a son of Thomas in the legal document of 1804 mentioned above. He sometimes was called Cornelius. He was born before 1775 and married in Ireland. His first wife, the mother of his daughter Grace, must have died not long after her birth, which occurred about the year 1790. After coming to America Neal married Hannah O'Donnell (daughter of Arthur

O'Donnell of Clearfield Township, Butler County), who emigrated from Ireland in 1798. Neal and Hannah lived at Buffalo Creek, where he owned 400 acres of land. They had three daughters and one son by 1810 and double those numbers by 1820. Neal died on February 28, 1835 and Hannah on March 11 and they were buried at St. Patrick's. The names of only five of their children are known, but through these five Neal had 18 grandchildren and 25 great-grandchildren by the time of his mother's death. None of Neal's descendants are known to have come through Ohio. Those descendants who are known have been identified by Bob and Mary Beth Wheeler and are listed on a RootsWeb site that can be accessed from www.thewheelers.com.

(To be continued)

NOTES

- 1) Lambing, Rev. Andrew A., *Brief Biographical Sketches of the Deceased Bishops and Priests who Labored in the Diocese of Pittsburgh...*, 1914, Vol. I, pp 76-77
- 2) *History of Butler County*, 1883, p. 309
- 3) Michael and Neal Dugan sold some 200 acres of land to Michael Maloney, a new immigrant, about 1810. This apparently is the land that became "Maloney's Corners." Of this land 150 acres was owned by Michael Maloney's grandson Jeremiah Maloney in 1883. It was at the intersection of the present Rattgan Road and Chicora-Fenelton Road, due south of Chicora, in the center of the township.
- 4) "100 Years of the Pittsburgh Catholic Diocese 1843-1943 with History of Early Parishes, and Chronology," *The Western Pennsylvania Genealogical Society Quarterly*, Summer 1990, Vol. 17 No. 1, pp 9-33; reprinted from the *Pittsburgh Chronicle* of March 16, 1943
- 5) *ibidem*
- 6) Lambing, Rev. A. A., *A History of the Catholic Church in the Diocese of Pittsburg and Allegheny*; New York: Benziger Bros., 1880; pp 27 and 409-415
- 7) Obituary, *The Catholic Telegraph*, Sept. 7, 1848. The obituary says they came to America in 1752, but clearly that was a typographical error for

1792. The children were all born in Ireland.
 8) Butler County Deed Record D/88
 9) *Biographical and Historical Memoirs of Muskingum County, Ohio*; Chicago: Goodspeed, 1892; p. 475
 10) *Zanesville Courier*, Apr. 25, 1899

- 11) *Catholic Home Companion*; undated copy of a few pages in the Catholic Record Society files.
 12) Montgomery to Fenwick, June 2, 1825; UNDA II-4-d A.L.S.
 13) *Catholic Telegraph*, Sept. 7, 1848
 14) *Catholic Telegraph*, Aug. 31, 1848



Baptisms at Wills Creek, Coshocton County, 1837-1900

(Continued, from Vol. XXXII, No. 10)

On May 23, Father O. H. Borgess entered his first record in the St. Nicholas Parish baptismal register. He and the following pastors wrote their entries in Latin, so, the form actually used by the people being uncertain, from this point forward the English form of given names will be used in this translation. Where both forms are common in English, such as James and Jacob, the more Germanic form will be used for those with German surnames.

1847

- July 14, Philip, son of Philip Commenacker [Krumenacker] and Laudina Dupré. Sponsors Matthias Fichter and Mary Dubré
 Sept. 13, Maysis, born Aug. 30, son of Francis Emor and Caroline his wife. Sponsors Maysis Day and Margaret Walter
 Sept. 14, Wendelin, born Aug. 22, of John Bodenkircher and Catherine Aschbach. Sponsor Catherine Aschbach
 Nov. 16, Mary Ann, born Oct. 15, of George Schuh and Elizabeth Lasch. Sponsors John Wagner and Mary Lasch.

1848

- May 16, Joseph, born January 16, son of Jacob Hegel and Regina Bodenkircher; spons. Valentine Wagner and Mary Bodenkircher.
 May 16, Mary Magdalen, born April 23, daughter of Gregory Wagner and Agatha Lesch; spons. Joseph Gunther and Walberga Wagner.
 May 16, Magdalen, born March 5, daughter of

- Mathias Fechter and Ann Barbara Schuh; spons. Andrew Fechter and Elizabeth Creter. [No place is listed for the above May 16 baptisms.]
 Sept. 26, Anna Maria, born July 28, daughter of George Bayer and Barbara Heinrich; spons. Joseph Schmidt and Anna Maria Heinrich.

1849

- Dec. 5 in the church of St. Mary, Wills Creek, John, born Sept. 11, of Patrick Crauly and wife Mary Henning; spons. Anna Maria Bordenkircher. Deselaers
 Dec. 5 in the church of St. Mary, Linton Twp., Coshocton Co., Michael, born Oct. 6, son of Anthony Schraub and his wife Mary Killowe; spons. Michael Heuser and Margaret Fresch. Deselaers
 Dec. 5 in the church of St. Mary, Linton Twp., Cosh. Co., John born Nov. 12, of Valentine Wagner and Magdalen Bodenkircher; spons. Gregory Wagner and Regina Bodenkircher. Deselaers

1850

- March 13 at St. Mary, Linton Twp., Coshocton Co., Margaret Ann born Feb. 9, of Gregory Wagner and Agatha Lesch; spons. Valentine Wagner and Magdalen Bodenkircher. M. Deselaers
 March 13 at St. Mary, Linton Twp., Coshocton Co., Margaret Elizabeth born Feb. 10 of Matthew Fachter and Barbara Schuh; spons.

Jacob Siggel and Magdalen Wimmer. M. Deselaers
 April 16 at St. Mary, Linton Twp., Coshocton Co., Joseph born April 7, of Jacob Klein and Catherine Siefert (no sponsors listed). M. Deselaers
 April 16 at St. Mary, Linton Twp., Coshocton Co., Magdalena, born Jan. 20 of Anthony Congon? and Rosalia Grandeur; spons. Martin Royer and Magdalen Wimmer. M. Deselaers
 April 16 at St. Mary, Linton Twp. Coshocton Co., Josepha Catherine born March 7, of Philip Krummeneker and Regina Duprée; spons. Michael Limberger and Catherine Hermann. M. Deselaers
 April 28 Catherine, born April 16, of Daniel Winter and Catherine Klein, spouses; spons. Sebastian Dulin son of Anthony [Dulin] and Mary Henry, daughter of Martin [Henry] in Wills Creek. Fr. Eug. Hyac. Pozzo, O.P.
 Sept. 22 John, born Aug. 16, son of Jacob Hegel and Regina Bordenkircher; spons. Caspar Hegel and Eve Heilmann. Wilhelm Deiters
 Oct. 8 in the church of St. Mary, Wills Creek, Elizabeth, born April 17, of George Baier and Barbara Heinrich; spons. John Doll and Elizabeth Schade. W. Deiters
 Oct. 9 in the church of St. Mary, Wills Creek, George, born June 6, of Benjamin Fechter and Catherine Asbacher; spons. Valentine Wachner and Magdalen Asbacher. W. Deiters
 Nov. 6 in the church at St. Mary in Wills Creek, Martin, born Sept. 20, of Thomas Mallin and Mary Ann Stilvel; spons. Martin Heuser and Mary Heuser. William Deiters

1851

Jan. 13 in Wills Creek, William, born Dec. 14, 1850, of Gregory Wagener and Agatha Lesch; spons. Valentine Wagner and Magdalen Wagner born Bordenkircher. W. Deiters

May 20 in Wills Creek, Catherine born May 7, of John Doll and Catherine Heinrich; spons. Daniel Winter and Mary Scherer. W. Deiters
 May 20 in Wills Creek, Caroline, born May 6, of John Aschbacher and Mary Ann Bordenkircher; spons. Michael Heuser and Magdalen Wagener. W. Deiters
 June 24 in the church of St. Mary at Wills Creek, Mary Magdalen, born May 12, of John Schu and Elizabeth Lesch; spons. Anthony Wimmer and Agatha Wagener. W. Deiters
 Sept. 1 in the church at Wills Creek, Margaret, born Aug. 25, of Michael Wagener and Mary Ann Losch; spons. Heinrich Schweitzer and Anna Catherine Günther. W. Deiters
 Sept. 30 in the church at Wills Creek, Eva, born Sept. 22, of Martin Dolich and Regina Scherrer; spons. John Joseph Scherrer and Eve Scherrer. W. Deiters
 Nov. 4 at Wills Creek, John, two years old, son of Frederick Gunther and Anna Maria Kobel; spons. John Aschbacher and Ann Aschbacher. W. Deiters
 Nov. 4 at Wills Creek, John, born Oct. 14?, son of John Mathern and Mary Ann Bordenkircher; spons. John Bordenkircher and Mary Heinrich. W. Deiters

1852

Jan. 20 in Wills Creek, Jacob, born Dec. 24, 1851, son of Jacob Kleine and Catherine Sievert; spons. Martin Bösherz and Magdalen Sievert. W. Deiters
 Apr. 20 in Wills Creek, William, born April 4, son of John Bordenkircher and Catherine Aschbacher; spons. Michael Heusser and Magdalen Schweiger. W. Deiters
 Same, Sara, born April 17, daughter of Daniel Winter and Catherine Klein; spons. John Klein and Catherine Klein. W. Deiters
 May 25 in Wills Creek, Mathias, born May 10, son of Mathias Fechter and Barbara Schuh; spons. Joseph Fechter and Margaret Fechter. W. Deiters

Same, John, born May 5, son of Bernard Fechter and Catherine Aschbacher; spon. John Aschbacher and Magdalen Aschbacher. W. Deiters

June 22 in Wills Creek, Regina, born June 17, daughter of George Beier and Barbara Heinrich; spon. Daniel Winter and Anna Maria Heinrich. W. Deiters

Aug. 24 in Wills Creek, John Stephen, born June 6, son of John Stephan Coujon and Rosalia Grandoe; spon. John Devid and Klotina Krumeneker. W. Deiters

Sept. 21 in Wills Creek, Catherine, born December 2, daughter of Jacob Kräther and widow Anna Maria Gunther born Kobel; spon. John Aschbacher and Catherine Marker. W. Deiters

Oct. 26 in Wills Creek, Mary Magdalen, born Sept. 29, daughter of Joseph Salere and Magdalen Nicola; spon. Justus Nicola and Klotine Düpre. W. Deiters

Nov. 23 in Wills Creek, Elizabeth, born Nov. 7, daughter of Jacob Ziegel and Elizabeth Limberger; spon. Matthias and Catherine Fechter, spouses. W. Deiters

Nov. 25 in Coshocton, Mary Ann, born Nov.

20, daughter of George Fechter and Mary Catherine Günther; spon. Ferdinand Fechter and Mary Günther. W. Deiters

1853

Jan. 27, Wills Creek, Joseph, born Dec. 26, 1852, son of John Mathern and Mary Ann Bordenkircher; spon. Michael Mathern and Anna Maria Bordenkircher. W. Deiters

April 27 in Wills Creek, Charles, born April 3, son of John Heinrich and Anna Maria Schneid; spon. John Mathern and Catherine Sivert. W. Deiters

Same, Barbara, born April 19, daughter of John Doll and Catherine Heinrich; spon. Henry Schweizer and Barbara Heinrich. W. Deiters

Same, Frances Caroline, born March 19, daughter of Simon? Miskimen? and Lucardia Weissenborg; spon. Martin Heinrich and Theresa Weissenborg. W. Deiters

July 28, Wills Creek, Anna Maria Theresa, born May 27, daughter of Francis Saleri and Mary Tamme?; spon. John Saleri and Ann Davied. W. Deiters

(To be continued)