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THE SLAVIC CATHOLICS OF GUERNSEY AND NOBLE COUNTIES
by Lorle Porter, Ph.D.

Part 2
The Byzantine Bishop and Schism at Trail Run

To outsiders, the ferment raging under the placid colors of a map of Central Europe in the early 1900s was unknown. It would be another dozen years before the ferment would erupt into world conflagration. To outsiders in America, the immigrant ferment was incomprehensible. Amidst the turmoil, a quiet movement underway for centuries in the backwaters of the Carpathian area profoundly influenced the future of that region, and of the immigrants to Guernsey and Noble counties. "Carpatho Rusyn" shepherds began to drift into the mountains from the Ukrainian buffer zone to the east, bringing with them deeply rooted cultural-religious attachment to Byzantine Christianity. (28) Although disputed, it is most likely that some had been in the mountainous region as part of the great migration of Slavs during the sixth and seventh centuries, but the largest number entered between Hungarian territory and the border in the thirteenth century. (29)

In their isolated villages, these people sensed themselves as distinct from Slovaks, Galician Russians, and Ukrainians. (30) That distinction was defined by the village dialect. In America, immigrants distinguished among themselves on the depth of accent. The closer the village was to Ukraine, the "deeper" the accent (dialect). Their own language was "soft", Ukrainian "hard"; Galicians spoke "Polak" (Slovak with a Russian accent), they spoke "Ponashemu" (in our own manner, a Ukrainian dialect strongly mixed with Slovak and Hungarian) and were Rusyn (rus' kye). (31) Similarities were overwhelming and the villagers and later immigrants conversed easily but were able to identify village or origin by a phrase or a sentence.

In political-religious confrontations during the Sixteenth century, the Rusyn peoples divided between Byzantine Catholicism and Russian Orthodoxy, the latter group drawn closer to the Russian cultural and political orbit and the Byzantines left in near isolation, adrift in Western culture. Still, among the Rusyn there existed a sense of identity defined by their mountainous home, their distance dialect, and allegiance to Eastern Christianity. They were a small people, depleted even more by migration. What was their unique character? Nationalists eventually rooted out of tradition the former heroes -- the Slovaks and Russian princes. What was left: the people themselves, their folklore, their proverbs, poetry, art, architecture, their legendary peasant leaders. Crucial to their folk life was their distinct version of

Divine Liturgy, the Protopinie, the liturgical plain chant distinguished from other Eastern liturgical music by the "liberal use of local folk melodies." (32) Wherever they went, the soaring anthems ringing down the hills told them they were home -- among their own -- "po-nasomu." But their existence was a problem for the Ukrainian steamroller, and for the Russian Orthodox Church. They were to conform -- like the "good little peasants" they were. The problem came with them to America.

The Roman Catholic Church in America was slowly awakening to the fact that it had a canonically correct, "foreign" rite in its midst, and that people would not abandon it for the "official" Latin rite. The bishops began, too late, to reach out tentatively to the immigrants. Bishop Phelan of Pittsburgh in 1904 issued a special pastoral letter explaining the history and prerogatives of the Byzantines, asking his priests to welcome them, but firmly asserting his own control. (33) In the same year, a series of explanatory articles appeared in the influential Jesuit monthly The Messenger. Even hostile bishops, such as Archbishop Ireland, reevaluated their position. The priests of the Byzantine rite soon were being welcomed by the Latin rite bishops, but the latter insisted upon the celibacy of these priests. However, the small calm was only the eye of the storm. Rome was yet to speak.

The Byzantine rite priests in America were pleading with Rome for their own bishop, and within a few years they were able to convince Rome of the justice of their cause. The Byzantine Metropolitan of Lvov (in Austrian-dominated Galicia) nominated and Rome appointed Stephen (Soter) Ortynski as bishop of all the Slav Byzantines in America. (34) Born to a noble family on an estate near the village of Ortynski in Galicia on January 29, 1866, Stephen took the religious name of Soter when he entered the monastic order of St. Basil the Great. He earned a doctoral degree at the Austrian University of Graz and was ordained a priest in Lvov in 1891. Soter spent his early priesthood as a charismatic preacher-teacher. His reputation "as a Ukrainian patriot and a dedicated missionary" was famous in Galicia. On May 12, 1907, Soter was consecrated bishop for the Americas in St. George Cathedral, Lvov. He then paid a call on Pope Pius X and embarked for America. He wrote an episcopal letter to his American priests which stated the painful truth: "I am a bishop without a diocese." He was responsible for all "Ruthenian" Catholics, but was dependent upon the Apostolic Delegate for enforcement of his decisions. His goal was to establish a full diocese, outside any Latin-rite control.

Bishop Soter was received with great enthusiasm by all the Church in America when he arrived in Philadelphia on August 27, 1907 (35), but the enthusiasm was short lived. His plans for orphanages, schools, and seminaries sank on the shoals of the ethnic issue. The bishop met with seventy-nine of his ninety-six priests in New York shortly after his arrival. (36) They were already suspicious of "their" new bishop, but the suspicion turned to outrage when he read to them the full text of the papal letter he brought with him. Ea Semper, dated June 14, 1907, in effect made the Byzantine bishop merely an auxiliary of the Latin rite bishops. The letter "severed all ecclesiastical ties between the (Byzantines) in America and their Mother Church." (37) Bishop Soter was charged with explaining several provisions of the document which were "highly offensive": priests were deprived of their right since time immemorial to administer infant baptism in conjunction with confirmation and henceforth only unmarried or widowed priests could function in America.

Clerical reaction to these signs of "latinization" was explosive: Soter was "a traitor to the Byzantine cause." But Soter was Byzantine, too. He resented the decree, so he ignored the celibacy instruction and promptly requested the bishop of Mukachaevo to send two married priests to him. (38)

The trauma over Ea semper coupled with the bishop's ethnicity made his appointment simply unacceptable to many in the Rusyn community and they "immediately took steps to make known their opposition." Huge propaganda was made of the fact that Soter was a Basilian monk and the order was "in the very forefront of the Ukrainian separatist movement" in Galicia. His every move became politically suspect. His was the "'unpardonable crime' -- he came of Ukrainian Stock!" (39) With outrage over the celibacy decree and the emotional crosswinds of ethnic anger, Soter faced an insurrection. Priests he sought to discipline, or ones who refused to move because their families refused, claimed political persecution and, if they had a Latin-rite bishop sympathetic to them, sought his support. Bishop Soter's administration was dead in the water. The one hundred twenty-odd Slavic Byzantine rite churches in America were engulfed in the upheaval.

This internal upheaval contributed to the flight of Byzantines into the waiting arms of Russian Orthodoxy. "The struggle with the Russian Orthodox, particularly over the attempts to appropriate Ruthenian Catholic churches, took on the most serious proportions, even involving the use of excommunication and lawsuits." (40) The Carpatho Rusyn in America who turned to Russian Orthodoxy thought they had been promised their own hierarchy, but their "return" was piecemeal and they were treated, as they had been in Europe, as second class citizens, by the same people who had so treated them in Europe. They eventually found their own tradition obscured by the traditions of the Great Russian Mother Church.

In 1913, Pope Pius X conferred "full and ordinary jurisdiction over all the faithful and clergy of the Byzantine-Slavic Rite in the U. S." to Bishop Soter. The American Ukrainians and Rusyns were thereby granted complete independence from the American Latin hierarchy. (41) It was too late. The seamless robe of the Byzantine Rite in America was in shreds. (42) His health shattered, Bishop Soter died of pneumonia on March 16, 1916. His refusal to compromise, his commitment to nationalistic causes, and his inability to prevent the issuance of Ea semper left his church in schism. (43) On August 17, 1914 the Vatican issued Cum episcopo as a clarification of Ea semper. This document, attempting to work out the complexities between the two rites and dealing with such things as marriage and mixed-rite baptisms, was well intentioned and "at least partially intended to safeguard the Eastern Rite" but it did nothing to dampen the winds of anger. The situation was thoroughly politicized. It is in this forcefield that the Byzantine Rite of Guernsey-Noble counties was magnetized.

Trail Run

(Author's note: The problem of research in dealing with Eastern Christians is acute. Since the immigration of the priests was informal, church archives have only scattered information. The problem locally is compounded because the important records of both St. Michael's Byzantine Church (Pleasant City) and St. Michael's Russian Orthodox Church (Trail Run) were destroyed in fires. The records for the Byzantine Church in Belle

Valley, kept by the Pleasant City priest, also perished. The story I have pieced together of the life of the Byzantine community comes, then, from surviving church records at Pleasant City, Byesville Holy Trinity records, Guernsey County court records, and funeral home and cemetery records. It varies somewhat from the Pleasant City parish souvenir booklet.

(The problem of the Russian Orthodox community is similar. The church records burned in the tragic, fatal fire of 1958. Court records concerning the property trial in 1913 have not survived in the Noble County courthouse. The Guernsey Times and Weekly Jeffersonian 1913-1914 carried not one word on this case, although it was volatile enough to force a change in venue. Fortunately for posterity, Joseph Grisak, a literate miner and driving spirit in the creation of the Russian parish in Trail Run, wrote a family memoir during his early retirement brought about by Black Lung. His son Michael translated it from Little Russian and the Grisak family published the memoir. It is the single most valuable piece of information about the Byzantine-Orthodox communities. No countering Byzantine view exists. People who lived through the 1913-1914 trauma are unwilling or unable to discuss it.

(The same scarcity of evidence holds true for the 1932 situation in Belle Valley. No newspaper coverage of the case exists in the Jeffersonian or in the Caldwell papers. The court filing and the court decision -- terribly ambivalent -- alone survive. Trustees of the Elevation of the Holy Cross Church have refused to discuss its history. The history of the Eastern Christians in Guernsey-Noble counties, then, has been written from bits and pieces, and, I hope, with some level of sensitivity.)

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The religious/nationality upheavals in Europe and in America were of prime importance in the Guernsey County coal towns, where most of the inhabitants still thought of themselves as European. The dispute proved as divisive locally as it was in the larger arena.

In 1911 Father Nicholas Burik baptized Michael Grizak in the Nardona Hall in Trail Run and on May 11 Father Alexander Dzubay baptized a child in St. Michael Byzantine Church in Pleasant City. The two coal towns were on the rim of a psychological and religious trauma. The miners in Trail Run started a collection to build their own church. Turmoil among the nationalities filtered down to the Guernsey County coal towns. Propaganda came in on the railroads and was read by gas light in miners' halls. Marie Troyan came home from church school where the deacon was teaching Russian and asked her grandfather who they were. The deacon "told us we were Estonians. We kids didn't question him, but I wasted no time asking my Grandfather if this was so. He said he thought Austro Hungary was our starting place." (44) The "nameless people" were beginning to ask questions. In Trail Run a portion of them found one answer.

By 1912 several thousand immigrants were living in the local villages. The Roman Catholic hierarchy was scrambling to care for them. The languages alone were a babble, the rite perplexing. Cambridge St. Benedict's Irish priests were overwhelmed; the Latin rite Slavic parish of the Holy Trinity in Byesville was swamped; St. Michael's Byzantine Rite Catholic Church in Pleasant City was bursting at the seams. People found themselves hard-pressed to maintain their faith, the core of their being.

Trail Run mushroomed from the Hutton pasture to host nearly two thousand people. The large majority of Slavs were Byzantines, but they were a mission of Pleasant City St. Michael. Nothing was theirs. Even their dead were buried in Christian kindness in Bethlehem Methodist churchyard in the Lower End. (45) But the community was well organized. Cislo 316 of the Greek Catholic Brotherhood flourished: the Sojedeninija had one hundred members and a treasury of \$900. The birth rate in the village was high. Some of the miners had been there thirty years. People recreated memories of the old world: the picket fences of Slovinky, the aura of home, but they did not have a church.

(To be continued)

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NOTES

28. Mark Stolarik, "The Slovaks", Harvard Encyclopedia of American Ethnic Groups (Cambridge, 1980), p. 926. The term Carpatho-Rusyn, will be used, following the logic of Paul Magocsi in Shaping a National Identity, as reviewed in Carpatho-Rusyn American XI #4, Winter, 1988.
29. Magocsi, Our People, page 7.
30. Mrs. Berlyn Noe, Oral History Interview, December, 1987.
31. Paul Robert Magosi, "Carpatho-Rusyns", Harvard Encyclopedia of American Ethnic Groups (Cambridge, 1980), p. 206.
32. Ibid.
33. Stephen C. Gulovich, "Rusin Exarchate in the United States", Eastern Church Quarterly (October, 1946), p. 471. Emily Greene Balch, Our Slavic Fellow Citizens (New York, 1910), p. 128. A copy of the Pastoral Letter, "Diversity of Rite no Obstacle to unity of Faith and Obedience," as published in The Pittsburgh Catholic, November 10, 1904, was provided after diligent research by Rev. Edward F. McSweeney, Archivist, Diocese of Pittsburgh. The bishop clearly asserted his authority and reaffirmed all diocesan rules and regulations. It was published in a Slavic dialect in a parallel form.
34. Magosi, "Carpatho-Rusyns", Harvard Encyclopedia, p. 203-204. "Until 1916, all Greek Catholics in the U.S., whether Carpatho-Rusyn, Ukranians, Slovak, Hungarian or Croat, belonged to the same church." Ibid.
35. Jaroslav Roman, "Establishment of American Carpatho-Russian Orthodox Green Catholic Diocese in 1938", St. Vladimir's Theological Quarterly, XX, No. 3 (1976), p. 137.
36. Bodhan P. Procko, "Soter Ortynsky: First Ruthenian Bishop in the United States", The Catholic Historical Review, LVIII (January, 1973), pp. 521-522
37. Roman, 137
38. Keith P. Dyrud, "The Establishment of the Green Catholic Rite in America as a Competitor to Orthodoxy", The Other Catholics, pp. 224-225.
39. Gulovich, op. cit., pp. 475 - 476.
40. Procko, op. cit., p. 531.
41. Ibid., p. 529.
42. The church consisted of 152 churches with resident pastors, 43 missions and 154 priests with some half-million souls. Ohio had 13 churches.
43. Dyrud, op. cit., p. 225.
44. Interview, Marie Troyan Smith, December 18, 1988.
45. Burials in Bethlehem include Steve and Anna Beskid; he 1884-1982, she still living. A Byzantine cross marks their stone; Anna Golmitz (1901-1973), Eva Haschak (1912-1914), Stephen Ihnat, died 1933, Julie, Joseph, and Andy Pacuta and Frederick and Eliza Meitza.

ORIGINS OF GERMAN CATHOLICS OF COLUMBUS
FROM THE HOLY CROSS PARISH CENSUS
(Continued from Vol. XVII, Number 4)

Giessler, Georg, born 23 March, 1845 in Bieberach, Baden, son of Joseph Giessler and Eliz. Schwarz. Wife Catharina Schöner, born 25 Nov., 1842 in Baden Steinach, daughter of Georg Schöner and Monica Schwendemann. (three children)

Göhl, Erhard, born 18 Feb., 1826 in Maineck, son of Georg Göhl and Helena Heinkelmann. Wife Dorothea Kleuderlein, born 16 March, 1833 in Mainroth, Bamberg, daughter of Johann Kleuderlein and Cunigunde Klemenz. Married 15 Feb., 1855. (four children)

Göhl, Georg, born 1838, died 23 May, 1887. Wife Barbara Michel, born 27 June, 1846 in Markschorgast, Wernek, Oberfranken, daughter of Ruprecht and Margaretha Michel; died 1 Feb., 1904. (five children)

Götz, Louis, born 25 Sept., 1853 in Elsass, died 25 Nov., 1914. Wife Maria Deibel, daughter of Caspar Deibel, born Nov. 19, 1853, died Sept. 22, 1914. (six children)

Gramlich, Sebastian, born 20 Jan., 1815 in Estringen, Bruhsaal, Baden, son of Michael Gramlich and Margaretha; died 14 April, 1899. Wife Magdalena Müller, daughter of Johann Müller and Catharina Wernert, from Kesternholz, Elsass; died 26 Apr., 1898. (four children)

Grether, Nic., born 1803 in Schleithal, Nieder Elsass, of (?) and Catharina Grether; died 7 Oct., 1848 in Taylorsville, near Zanesville. Wife Maria Huck, born 1801 in Stundweiler, Elsass, daughter of Johann Huck and Marg. Fischer. Married 1819 in Stundweiler. (four children)

Grün, Andreas, born 20 Feb., 1850 in Columbus, son of Adam Grün and Cath. Wittmann, from Dingfeld, Hessesstadt, Bamberg. Wife Anna Kessler, born 25 Apr., 1853 in Columbus, daughter of Ludwig Kessler and Anna. Married 16 March, 1876. (one daughter)

Gschwilm, Franz X., born 1830 in Waltenhausen, Krumbach. Wife Kunigunde Braun, born 18 July, 1833, Hallendorf, Forchheim, B., daughter of Georg Braun and Cath. Hagen. (four children)

Gschwilm, John Chryst., born 8 Oct., 1826 in Waltenhausen, Krumbach, Baiern, son of Johann Gschwilm and Francisca Huber; died 1883. Wife Barbara Bauer, born 1823 in Lothringen, daughter of Georg Bauer and Catharina. Married 1837. (seven children)

Hamfrisz, Benjamin (Bell St.; Holy Family Parish), born 24 Aug., 1850 in Toronto, Canaca. Wife Anna Babbert, born 9 Jan., 1848 in Columbus, daughter of Carl Babbert from Rockenhausen, Kaiserslautern, and Anna Reheis from Zweibrücken. (three children)

Hannauer, Georg Wilhelm, son of Nicholas Hannauer (died 1849), born in Oberbexbach, Zweibrücken, Rheinpfalz. Wife Catharina Woelfel, born 4 April, 1825 in Huntington County, Pa., daughter of Cyriac Woelfel and Christina

Dorothy Lusch; died 22 July, 1906. (She was the widow of Christian Hann of Indianapolis.) (three children)

Hannauer, George Wilhelm jr., born 27 May, 1846. Wife Magdalena Götzt, born 25 Oct., 1851 (or 1857?) in Schönburg, Elsass, daughter of Franz Götzt and Magd. Müller. (three children)

Hannauer -- see also Nonnemacher.

Haupt, Franz, born 10 May, 1849. Wife Catharina, daughter of Carolus Eberhard and Theresia, born 10 Apr., 1849 in Riegel, Baden, died 22 July, 1910.

Haupt, Georg, born 23 Nov., 1846 in Burgertroth, Kissingen, Aschaffbg., son of Caspar Haupt. Wife Eliz. Antlitz, born 27 March, 1843 in Poppenroth, Kissingen, daughter of Johann Antlitz and Anna Kleinhenz.

Heinemann, Friedrich, born 14 Aug., 1802 in Renshausen, Hannover, son of Johann Heinemann and Veronica Brodrick. Wife Eva Rosa Trautmann, born 12 Feb., 1823 in Ritchenhausen, Arnstein, Baiern.

Heinrich, Georg, born 26 July, 1834 in Nieder Otterbach, Canton Bergzabern, Rheinpfalz, son of Jacob Heinrich (born in Steinfeld) and Margaretha Frank (of Nieder Otterbach). Wife Elizabetha Wolf, born 1837, died 1 April, 1878. (seven children)

Hemmersbach, Franz, born Seligentghal, Cöln. Wife Eliz. Kläger, born 12 Sept., 1841, Deavertown, Morgan Co., Ohio, daughter of Cornelius Kläger and Agatha Yung. Married in Zanesville. (five children)

Hemsteger, Gertrud, born 23 Dec., 1819 in Altschermbeck, Recklinghausen, Münster, daughter of Johann Joseph Hemsteger and Anna Cath. Schulte, died Sept., 1902.

Henn, Carolina, born 9 May, 1858 in Pliskatel, Trier, daughter of Henry Henn and Eva Keller; step-daughter of Peter Derrick of Columbus.

Hennes, Nic., born 14 Aug., 1851 in Oberbexbach, Rheinpfalz, son of Johann Hennes and Eliz. Schulz; died 30 Jan., 1908. Wife Margaret Dotter. (eight children)

Hermann, Coelestin, born 11 April, 1811 in Weistingen, Oberamb. Horb, Wurtemberg, son of Martin Hermann and Cath. Sauter. Wife Gertrude Haemmerle, born 17 March, 1821, daughter of Aegidius and Catharine (Zettler) Haemmerle of Hirschhau, Rotenburg, Würtemberg. Married in Chillicothe. (nine children)

Hermann, Joseph, born 16 Feb., 1847 in Chillicothe [son of Coelestin, below]. Wife Emma Hauck, born 11 July, 1849, daughter of Felix Hauck and Bertha Becker from Baden. Married 27 Apr., 1869. (six children)

Hermann, Michael, born 20 Sept., 1820 in Illertissen, Bayern, son of Dominic Hermann and Walburga Esperle; died 13 Nov., 1902. Wife Victoria Pfister, born 24 March, 1825 in Buch, Baiern, Litzesried, daughter of Sebastian Pfister and Anna Maria Ochs; died 14 Feb., 1902. Married 6 Feb., 1853. (eight children)

Hinterschitt, John. Wife Theresia Köhler, born 30 Apr., 1844 in Union County, Ohio, daughter of Franz Joseph Köhler and Mary Anne Higel, from Busenberg. (four children)

Hinterschitt, Martin, born 19 June, 1826 in Baierfeld, Kaiserslautern, Rheinpfalz, son of Peter Hinterschitt and Wilhelmina Heckmann; died Jan. 15, 1909. Wife Catharina Anna Pfeifer, born 18 June, 1829 in Baierfeld, daughter of Wilhelm Pfeifer and Wilhelmina Hinterschitt; died Sept., 1879. Married in 1852 in Columbus. (nine children)

Hinterschitt, Peter -- see Theado, Henry.

Hiss, Daniel, born in Baden, [died?] 8 Nov., 1876. Wife Catharina Klager, born 18 March, 1848 in "Tridalphy", Morgan County, Ohio, daughter of Cornelius Klager and Agatha Jung. Married at St. Mary's. (three children)

Hock, Anton, born 2 Nov., 1842, son of Leonard (below); died 28 Apr., 1898. Wife Eliz. Bausch, born 27 Jan., 1854 in Philadelphia, Pa., daughter of Philip Bausch and Crescentia Burger. Married 6 Oct., 1870. (four children)

Hock, Leonard, born 21 April, 1811 in Keilberg, Aschaffenburg, Baiern, son of Johann Hock and Barbara. Wife Eliz. Stahl, born 6 Jan., 1811 in Hesselbach, Rothenfels, Baiern, daughter of Johann Stahl and Emilia; died 4 Apr., 1874. Married in 1834; in Columbus 1839. (six children) See also Laufersweiler.

Hoch, Peter, born in 1828 in Elsass. Wife Maria Sauer, born Oct., 1848 in Columbus, daughter of Isaac Sauer and Maria. (six children)

Hodapp, Anton, born 15 Jan., 1849 in Baden, son of Barbara. Wife Anna Frank, born 14 May, 1854, daughter of John Frank. (four children)

Hodapp, Frank Ig., born 9 Oct., 1844 in Grossweier, Amt. Achern, Baden, son of Ignatz Hodapp and Barbara Krumm; died 21 Nov., 1904. Wife Barbara Baudendistel, born 22 Dec., 1848 in Mesbach, Achern, daughter of Michael Baudendistel and Regina Kessel. Married at Messbach, 14 June, 1869. (five children)

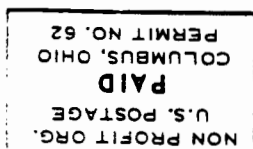
Hoffmann, Jacob, born 19 May, 1830 in Gölshausen, Oberamt Bretten, Baden, son of Andreas and Ernestina Hoffmann; died 9 April, 1909. Wife Regina Inis, born 6 Jan., 1828 in Flehingen, Bretten, Baden, daughter of Johann Inis and Kath. Lieb; died 13 Dec., 1916. Married 18 Feb., 1857 in Havre, France.

Hunzicker, John, born 11 Feb., 1832; died 1900. Wife Anna Maria Rupp, born 10 June, 1835; died 1900; from Oberkulm, Aargau, Schweiz. (seven children)
[Ed. note: both John and Anna Maria died in 1909, not 1900.]

(To be continued)

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