APPENDIX

ITEMS OF INTEREST FROM THE NEWPORT DAILY NEWS

Reception Ceremony

July 11, 1855

Two young ladies took the white veil or, in other words entered the Order of the Sisters of Mercy yesterday afternoon at the Catholic Church. The services were conducted by Bishop O'Reilly assisted by Bishop McGill and the Rev. James Fitton. The address was delivered by Bishop McGill. There was an immense crowd present, mostly Protestants. We shall give a more detailed account of the ceremony tomorrow.

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The services at the Catholic Church, The Holy Name of Mary, on Tuesday afternoon, were exceedingly solemn and impressive; and we propose to give some description of it for the benefit of those who were not present.

As the clock struck five, the procession, headed by the crossbearer and assistants, angels, so called, on this occasion, a select number of children attending the school of the Sisters attired in white dresses, with wreaths, bouquets and baskets of flowers, to the number of twenty-eight, moved from the hall door of the Convent, accompanied by the Mother Superioress and other ladies of this religious community, in the usual dress of their Order, to the Church and through the centre aisle to the Chancel, where they were received by the ordinary of the diocese, Right Rev. Bishop O'Reilly, Right Rev. Dr. McGill, of Richmond, Va.,

Rev. Mr. Fitton, Pastor of the Church, and his acolytes and assistants. If ever this Church might be called beautiful, and truly it is a masterpiece of Gothic art of the early decorative style, it was indeed so to the eyes of the immense audience assembled on this occasion,--with its gilded altars, adorned with statuary, lights and vases in chaste profusion.

This is what is termed the ceremony of reception. The Postulants, who were to be admitted to two years noviceship, that is, a time of probation before they are allowed to unite themselves with the Order, the object of which is to attend the sick, the aged, prisoners, and to educate children, were Miss Hannah Sullivan, called in religion Sister Ignatius, and Miss Mary Ann Madden, Sister Regis. These two young ladies in bride's attire, pure white, with white lace streaming from their heads, on which were wreaths of beautiful flowers, knelt between the Superioress and Assistant, the local Superioress of this city, Sister Mary Borgia, while the choir sang "Gloriosa Virginum," etc. This being finished, the Celebrant, the Bishop of the Diocese, recited the prayers used on such occasions. The sermon was preached by Bishop McGill, and was a fervent, excellent and most practical production. After the address by Bishop McGill, the Postulants were conducted by the Superioress and assistant before the Celebrant, who sat on the platform of the altar, when the following questions were propounded and answered:

Celebrant: My child, what do you demand?

Postulant: The mercy of God, and the holy habit of religion.

Celebrant: Is it with your own free will you demand the holy habit of religion?

Postulant: Yes, Right Rev. Sir.

The Celebrant then asked of the Superioress if she had made the necessary inquiries and was satisfied as to the vocation and sincere desire of the Postulants, to which she answered in the affirmative. The Celebrant again addressing the Postulants asked of them if they had thought deeply upon the subject, and were in expectation of being able to carry the yoke of our Lord Jesus Christ, solely for the love and fear of God. To which they severally replied in the affirmative, relying, as they said, on the mercy of God. After these questions and answers, the Superioress and Assistant retired with the Postulants to the Sacristy, to change their secular dresses, wreaths, veils, jewelry, etc., for the religious habit of the Order - The procession having returned to the chancel, during which time the Choristers in the Choir and Chancel sang alternately the Cxiii Psalm. The Celebrant continued the form of prayers, while the Superioress and Assistant placed the white veil on the heads of the Postulants and presented them with their cinctures, rosaries and crosses. Here all knelt while the Choir sang the hymn, "Veni, Creator Spiritus," invoking the influence of the Divine Spirit. After this the Celebrant continued other prayers and gave the final blessing, while the Choir sang the beautiful Psalm cxxxii, Ecce quam bonam, behold how good and how pleasant a thing it is, etc. The procession then returned in the same order as it entered. It was a very solemn and imposing occasion, and one which will not soon be forgotten.

Funeral

December 10, 1874

Funeral of a Sister of Mercy -

At noon today the funeral of Sister Mary Alphonsus of the Sisters of Mercy was solemnized at St. Mary's Church, Father Grace officiating. The deceased had been an invalid for some time but had greatly endeared herself to the Catholics of this city. The remains were followed to their last resting place by Mary's Catholic Benevolent Society, the Children of Mary, and the children's societies of St. Aloysius and the Infant Jesus, and many persons not connected with organizations. The funeral procession contained over nine hundred persons, and extended from Washington Square to Warner Street.

St. Mary's Catholic Sunday School

April 3, 1875

Connected with St. Mary's Church is a Sunday school containing over six hundred scholars under the charge of the Sisters of Mercy. The school has two sessions of an hour each. The Sisters are aided by young ladies from the parish, and monitors selected from the day schools.

Funeral

January 3, 1877

Honors to the dead - The funeral of Sister Basilia who died so suddenly on Sunday last was solemnized from St. Mary's Church yesterday. The storm was so severe many who would otherwise have been present were kept away.

The remains of the departed were enclosed in a plain rosewood casket, without any ornamentation and the plate bore this inscription:

Sister Basilia Duffy
Died Dec. 31, 1876
Aged 28 years

The casket was brought into the church and put on a catafalque, which had been placed near the altar where it was surrounded by one hundred burning candles. A select choir sang appropriate hymns and Rev. Father Grace conducted the requiem Mass for the repose of the soul of the departed after which he delivered a very able and eloquent sermon which was listened to with great interest and moved many to tears.

The remains were deposited in the Catholic cemetery alongside the sister who died a few years ago. Among those present from abroad was the Reverend Mother of the Order in the State, Sister Climacus and Mother Superior Sister Juliana, from Fall River. Many sisters and others from abroad would doubtless have been there but for the storm, causing the detention of the cars and steamboats. As it was impossible to reach the cemetery in carriages, Mr. Anthony Stewart took one of his heavy teams and leveled the streets leading thereto and for which he deserves no little credit.

The funeral arrangements were in charge of William J. Quinn and Thomas Galvin.

Funeral

January 6, 1877

The following is an example of Victoriam poetry:

IN MEMORIAM

Sister Mary Basilia

At the Convent of Mercy, Newport, R. I.

December 31, 1876

Cold, cold, in the snow,
Sweet sister, low you lie.
Pure, pure as the snow
Your life, so young went by.

T'was frail, frail as the breath,
Of roses sweet in June;
T'was fair, fair as the light
That gleams from silv'ry moon.

Like to a meteor's flash,
That life so fair, went out.
And like the rose it shed
Too soon its leaves about.

Ah me! Too soon it sped,
Its way to Heaven above,
Too soon it left us lone,
To weep, but yet to love.

This well your day is done,
And all your ills are o'er;
Ah Sister! now you taste
That bliss you longed for sore

Your spirit pure has fled
Its prison cell of clay!
With angels now you tread.
Thro' flow'ry paths your way.

Oh, may we strive like you,
A bright crown too to win!
And may we guard our lives
From every stain of sin!

St. Mary's Academy

July 1, 1879

The annual examination of classes at this Academy took place yesterday. The Rev. Dr. Grace and Father Clinton, with a large number of the parents and friends of the pupils, were present. The exercises were opened by a short address from Dr. Grace full of advice and good counsel to the scholars, after which a most thorough and satisfactory examination in music, the English branches and classics was undergone by the pupils, and the proficiency manifested argues well for their industry and diligence, and indeed reflected great credit upon the good sisters Ursula as superior, and Sisters Zita and Josephine as principals in the young misses' and young masters' departments.

Miss Mary Horgan and Miss Katy Callahan, two of the graduating "stars" received two silver medals for proficiency in music, having acquitted themselves with great credit in that branch of their studies. These two young ladies bid fair to make their mark in the musical world. Miss Mary Beatty gave evidence of advanced

scholarship and received also a silver medal. The Misses Mary Fitzpatrick and Mary Coen were honored with silver medals for proficiency and good record in general studies. The Misses Nellie Casey, Annie Boyle, Josephine Reagan, Maggie Buckley and Helena Doherty, of the graduating class, also received, for advancement in their English and classical studies, very appropriate and valuable books. The undergraduates were found to be well advanced in their elementary studies and received particular praise and credit for the close application and attention manifest in their different studies. Dr. Grace dismissed the school for a two-months vacation with a few brief, appropriate and touching remarks, concluding with his blessing and tendering to them a solemn and affectionate invocation of happiness during their future life.

School

July 24, 1880

The Church of the Holy Mary Our Lady of the Isle, situated on Spring Street, was erected about the year 1850. It has the largest congregation in the city, but we are not able to give the exact membership. The Rev. Dr. Grace is the pastor with Rev. Father Clinton as assistant. The Sunday School is in charge of the Sisters and has about 560 scholars. It holds two sessions on each Sabbath.

Sanitary Protection Association

Wed., April 12, 1882

The secretary reported that since the last meeting, inspection has been made of the residences of Rev. Mr. Peet, Professor Pumpelly, and Mr. Samuel Tilton, two houses of Professor Gammell,

and the Convent of the Sisters of Mercy. With reference to the latter, it was mentioned that though membership in the association had been obtained in the usual manner, there existed a provision in the constitution in accordance with which the inspection "of any school house, church or other public building whose sanitary condition if faulty may imperil the health of citizen or member of his family, will be met from the general fund of the association." The occupants of the convent were wholly engaged in charitable work, thefees received from the instruction given in that building being more than counter-balanced by the uncompensated labor in the larger and public school. The sisters had promptly carried into effect the advice of the association regarding vaccination of the children under their charge, and they had shown equal wisdom in requesting the association to assume the sanitary direction of their new building. The clause quoted probably covered the case, yet to remove all doubt, Dr. Storer moved that the present year's fee for inspection of the Convent of Mercy be remitted to the Sister Superior. Seconded and passed.

It was stated that in accordance with the vote of the council a communication had been sent to the State Board of Health requesting it to extend to the city authorities of Newport any aid that might be necessary towards preventing further extension of small-pox. Mention was made of the fact that a previous memorial of the council through its executive officer to the National Board of Health had been sent by that board to Governor Littlefield, by him to Mayor Slocum and by that gentleman read to the Board of Aldermen, as the Board of Health of Newport, though a copy of that communication had apparently been refused by His Honor to the representatives of the

press. Mention was also made of the promotion of the city physician to the State Board, and to the chairmanship of that Board lately filled by the deceased Dr. King, and the hope was expressed that as the latter gentleman, at first so conservative, eventually came to sympathize with the object and methods of the association, it might also prove the case with the new incumbent.

School

June 14, 1882

The inspection and improvement of the sanitary condition of St. Mary's Parochial school made at the instance of the acting pastor of St. Mary's Church . . . special attention was called to the constant evil resulting from the presence of a liquor saloon within a few steps of the entrance of St. Mary's Parochial School frequented daily by over 400 children of both sexes.

June 30, 1882

The closing exercises of the school year at St. Mary's Academy were held yesterday afternoon at the convent . . . Had the privacy with which the exercises were intentionally conducted permitted, the presence of a larger audience, not a parent, whether father or mother, and no matter what their sectarian sympathies, but who would have said that those children are fortunate who while living at home, are able to spend the school hours of each day in so peaceful a place as the convent and under the guidance of teachers, so gentle, so amiable, and so devoted to their work as the ladies of the Sisterhood of Mercy.

SCHOOL

February 29, 1884

ST. MARY'S PAROCHIAL

His Honor, Mayor Franklin, upon the invitation of the chairman of the public school committee, accompanied also by Superintendent Littlefield and Collector Cozzens, made a brief visit this morning to St. Mary's schools on Levin Street. The party was very cordially received by Reverend Dr. Grace and his associates, Father Thomas Grace and Father Doran and shown through the several grades, in each of which there were interesting exercises. Though a very cold and uncomfortable morning, the several rooms were well filled, and everything seemed working in first class order. The number of pupils to each teacher is considerably larger than is allowed in our public schools, which must require hard work on the part of those in charge, and yet it was evident that the burden is cheerfully and faithfully borne. The schools were found well graded, with a system of promotion similar to that in use elsewhere, the numbers in the primary and intermediate classes largely predominating. The singing of the pupils showed thorough training in this department, and was very gratifying to the visiting party. While in one of the girls' schools, where sixty or more were engaged in this exercise, in response to a remark as to the fine appearance of the class, Dr. Grace called the attention of the visitors to the fact that no "bangs" were observed. However, some "bangs"had invaded even these precincts, though they were combed back so as not to be easily seen. In one case in a more advanced class one bang had actually got loose in spite of the rule, so hard is it to stay the progress even of a senseless fashion.