The Jesuit Province of New England

THE EXPANDING YEARS

James Leo Burke, S. J.
JESUIT PROVINCE
OF
NEW ENGLAND:

The Expanding Years

by

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with a forward by
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Foreword

Rev. James Leo Burke, S.J. had served for many years as an administrator in the New England Province of the Society of Jesus. His knowledge of what happened in the past and why it happened indicates that he is a Jesuit exceptionally qualified to write the history of the province since its inception in 1926.

As a participant in many of the events that he has narrated, both in his first volume on the formative years, published in Boston in 1976, and in this second volume on the expanding years, Father Burke was in a unique position to give testimony and interpretation for the important events. As a professor who has taught historical method, he would be the first to concede that other viewpoints do exist, particularly with respect to such a controversial issue as the dissolution of the Jesuit apostolate at Xavier High School in Concord, Massachusetts.

The second volume of this work had been finished for about four years when I began to inquire about its status. It was not long after I had shown an interest in trying to dislodge the manuscript from oblivion that Rev. John J. Begley, S.J., Socius of the New England Province of the Society of Jesus, approached me in August of 1983 to see if I could put the manuscript in shape for publication.

The manuscript has its own peculiar history. While
Father Burke wrote it out in script, it had to be typed out by secretaries in the Provincial Offices in those periods when they had the free time for it. Given the inevitable shift in personnel not only on the provincial level but also within the secretarial staff, changes inevitably took place that tended to neglect a process of this type for the preparation of a manuscript.

Fortunately, Rev. James E. Powers, S.J., the Province Archivist, kept a handle on the work. Although there had been a change of secretaries, as well as in the location of the Provincial Offices, it was he who was able to bring the finished, typed pieces of the work together after having found them scattered here and there. I learned much about the confusion of this manuscript and what I found to be its missing typed parts from my own conversations with both Father Burke and Father Powers. Consequently, if one is looking for the author's original drafts, Father Burke's own papers constitute the point of origin of this process.

Nevertheless, in reviewing the typing of the secretarial staff, both Father Burke and Father Powers had gone over the manuscript before it came into my hands. When I saw it, I decided that it would be best to make an arrangement with the personnel staff at Holy Cross College to have it typed into a word processor so that I could more easily exercise my role as copy editor than if I were to restrict myself to working over
the typed draft of the manuscript. For this arrangement, the New England Province is indebted to the oldest Catholic college in New England which happens to be Father Burke's alma mater.

Still I should point out that my task in preparing the manuscript for publication was not altogether easy. Understandably, Father Burke suggested that I prepare the manuscript as closely to the typed draft as I could. While I have tried to follow this rule, it was necessary at times to swerve from it so that clarity would prevail, especially in the identification of persons and places that arise in his narrative. At the same time, I have cut down the lengthy paragraphs into shorter ones so that the logical development of the narrative could prevail. Since the individual chapters were submitted to Father Burke for his review, the final product remains his own work. What is published here is the whole manuscript except for the extended appendix on Joseph H. Rockwell (1862-1927), a Boston native who was the Jesuit Provincial at the time of the founding of the New England Vice-Province of the Society of Jesus in 1921.

As Father Burke himself has already indicated in his preface, his second volume does not complete the history of the New England Province of the Society of Jesus. My own work, The Jesuit Heritage in New England (Worcester, 1977) constitutes a different approach than what Father Burke has presented in his two volumes. However, the efforts of both authors can be viewed

personnel, an extended view is presented of special studies from 1945 to 1968.

Next to the last school expansion was at Xavier in Concord. Despite its academic excellence, it encountered disappointing registration, the diminution in Jesuit members, and
as supplementing one another. Still, with the approach of the 375th anniversary of the arrival of the first Jesuit in New England in 1986 and the 450th anniversary of the Society of Jesus in 1990, one hopes that a third historian will be able to complete those chapters that remain to be written in the history of the New England Province.

If it had not been for the interest of Fathers Richard T. Cleary, Edward M. O'Flaherty, and Robert E. Manning, the three provincials who have been in office during the development of the manuscript, this work would never have come to term. I am very pleased to have been able to make it possible for Father Burke and these three men, who have held the office of provincial during its development, to bring this second volume to publication.

Lastly, the reader should understand that Father Burke's narration goes down to 1979. Since that time, a number of Jesuits mentioned in this work have died and the property of the Cranwell School has been sold. If this perspective is maintained, the reader should find this history very informative.

Vincent A. Lapomarda, S.J.
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College of the Holy Cross
1 January 1986
Preface

This second set of chapters on the history of the New England Province is a story of development, retention and, in one notable instance, of withdrawal of Jesuit presence. The narrative begins in 1929 with the request of Father General Wlodimir Ledochowski for the foundation of a school in Baghdad, and carries the early arrangements up to the sailing on February 9, 1932 of the first two missionaries to Iraq. Next, it follows the efforts in 1936 of Fr. William J. Murphy to establish an overseas secondary school in Buenos Aires. The rapid expansion of school work at Cranwell, Fairfield, and Portland follow along with the moving of Boston College High School from James Street to Dorchester.

From expansion there is a pause while the former Weston College Scholasticate, threatened with removal to Dixville Notch, New Hampshire, remained at Weston. Since the history of Baghdad College is enshrined in the colorful pages of Al Baghdadi, the narrative here dwells for four chapters on possible and even temporary expansions in Transjordan and Iran. Because so many schools and allied activities required trained personnel, an extended view is presented of special studies from 1945 to 1968.

Next to the last school expansion was at Xavier in Concord. Despite its academic excellence, it encountered disappointing registration, the diminution in Jesuit members, and
the growing desire for other apostolic endeavors, all of which led to the final withdrawal of Jesuit presence in 1971.

Much, obviously, has not been covered in these years of attempts and inaugurations beginning from 1929. A few beginnings were covered in the original volume. When individual houses or property have been studied, the matter is confined as much as possible to province inauguration and initial support, while subsequent history is left to historians of each house or project.

Some topics were omitted because source material was inadequate or characterized by lacunae. This applied to some schools, retreat works, and special and important projects. The story of disposing of the villa at Keyser Island and the gradual acquisition of Sunapee and later of South Dartmouth was left partially typed because so much data was missing and there seemed no one able to supply missing links. It is hoped that some day another author can fill these many lacunae. No adequate documentation was available on the inauguration of Connolly High School at Fall River.

Appreciation is chiefly to two Jesuits—one living and one deceased. Fr. James E. Powers, the province archivist, was most diligent in ferreting out important collections of source material, in supplying small but crucial details, and in noting numerous minor errors in dates, initials, and spellings.
The late Fr. William E. Fitzgerald was one of the few who had inside knowledge and who was willing to share it in numerous conversations and in brief written memoranda.

Through Fr. Richard T. Cleary, the provincial secretarial staff was prepared to type my impossible handwriting. He also initiated the project of a province history and encouraged this second publication as he did the first. Bro. H. Francis Cluff was most prompt and thorough in supplying needed financial information. Fr. John F. Mullin was most kind in having parts of the total Xavier material taped for easier use by one member of the secretarial staff. Others whose aid on limited matter was crucial included Fathers Charles F. Duffy, Raymond J. Callahan, James P. Larkin. Always encouraging were the numerous inquiries and requests, heard since 1976, to have more of the province history written and made available.

If a dedication is not inappropriate in a preface, this work is dedicated in the first place to several of my novice contemporaries: James E. Risk, John J. Long (d.), John C. Ford, William J. Schlaerth (d.), John F. X. Bellwoar, James L. Harley, John P. Carroll (d.). It is also dedicated to a series of other Jesuits who helped to shape my ascetical and academic life: Gerald A. Dillon (d.), Edward P. Tivnan (d.), John M. Fox (d.), John F. X. Murphy (d.), James A. Cahill (d.), William J. McGarry (d.), and, finally, to one (somewhat) younger
Jesuit, now a jubilarian, who most profoundly and permanently affected my life's values--John J. ("Giovanni") Walsh.

Where the narrative approaches our own time more closely than did the events in Volume One, there will be different judgments on people and events than those herein expressed. For them the writer must accept responsibility.

This preface is dated March 10, 1979, the anniversary of the death in 1615 of St. John Ogilvie. He turned away the wrath of an angry, even abusive woman who deplored his somewhat homely face, by means of his simple blessing on her bonny face. May there be a bonny face on the narrative and the value judgments of this history through the merits and intercession of St. John Ogilvie.

James L. Burke, S.J.

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Boston, Massachusetts

March 10, 1979