

Barquilla de la Santa Maria

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ERHARD STOKER BROAD & HIGH BREWER

by Donald M. Schlegel (Copyright 1995)

In the nineteenth century, when water often was unsafe to drink and milk was not pasteurized, the brewers and fermenters of alcoholic beverages carried out the important function of providing beverages that were free of bacteria. In addition, the "coffee houses" and bier gartens that they supplied were an important element in the cohesion of the immigrant German community. The first German brewer in Columbus was a Catholic from Baden, Bernhard Burck, a founding member of St. Remigius parish who owned the Washington Brewery on East Fulton Street.¹ One of the very earliest producers of wine in the county was also a Catholic from immigrant Germany, Michael Reinhart.² The local brewing and fermenting traditions established by these men and their families were continued by many others such as Louis Hoster, Jacob Silbernagel, George Michael Schlegel, and Nicholas Schlee.³ Of all of the others, the only Catholic brewery owner was Erhard Stoker.

The first records of Erhard Stoker in Columbus appear in the year 1860. That year's city directory lists him as foreman at Born's new Capital Brewery, with residence nearby at 413 South Front. His son Ferdinand was also listed as a brewer. On August 2 of the same year, Erhard's infant son, Erhard junior, was baptized at Holy Cross Church. Ten days later, the child died and was buried at the old Catholic Cemetery at Washington and Mt. Vernon Avenues. Erhard probably had departed Germany for America about 1856 or 1857 at the age of about 41. He had been born in Baden on July 15, 1815.⁴ His wife Friederika (born Weidele), and their children followed and landed in New York City from the *Cedar*, from Bremen, on the feast of All Souls, 1857.⁵ Their five children were Ferdinand or Frederick, Charles, Sophia, Jacob, and little Erhard junior. (One of the sons attended Holy Cross School, where the records of the "little boys school" for 1863/4 and 1864/5 list "Stucker" or "Stocker" with no given name.)

Broad & High Brewery

Stoker arrived in Columbus nearly penniless, but through hard work he gradually built up his own business. From 1862 to 1866 he ran a saloon at 18 West Broad street. This site was on the north side of the street, just east of Wall street, occupied years later by the western end of the Deshler Hotel and now by One Columbus. The lot at that time contained three adjoining buildings facing Broad Street and additional out-buildings in the rear. The lot and buildings had been purchased by Lucius Chittenden at a sheriff's sale in 1858.⁶ Chittenden leased or rented the building at number 18 to Ernest Reichert, who used it as his residence and a "beer and bowling saloon."7

Stoker became proprietor of this saloon around 1861, with his son Ferdinand as bar keeper. Soon they began brewing their own beer on a limited scale, as is demonstrated by a federal license for brewing for five months, issued to "F. Stocker" in December, 1863. A license for six months was issued to Erhard in November, 1864. These licenses covered only the winter months, indicating that Stoker had no ice house or other cooling facilities needed for brewing in the warmer seasons. Erhard and Ferdinand were able to produce about thirty barrels per month in the cooler seasons. Year-round brewing was begun in 1865.⁸

The combination of his personal industriousness and the good location of the saloon in the center of town soon allowed Stoker to expand his business. On September 14, 1865 he purchased six lots on the southwest corner of Perry (now Whittier) and Front streets.⁹ This provided a large site for his residence and business expansion. Four days later, he signed a lease for the old Washington Brewery on East Fulton street, owned by the Burck family.

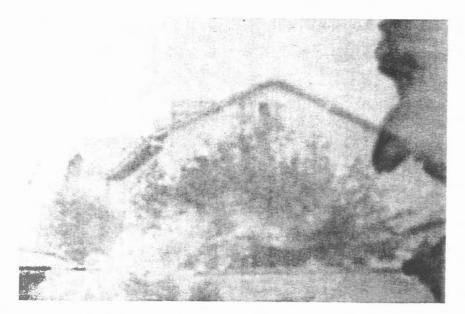
The lease of the Washington Brewery, which was effective October 1, 1865 included "all the appurtenances thereto belonging (Except the frame House in the rear of the House) also the yard belonging to said Brewery, and Ice House." He was to pay fifty dollars per quarter for the first year and sixty dollars per quarter for the next four years. There followed in the lease a not-altogether-clear statement, which probably resulted from a thought being translated from German into English: "The said Erhard Stocker is to pay for repairing but to all his fixtures necessary for brewing business, he is entitled by leaving the premises."¹⁰ This seems to mean that he was to repair the brewing equipment then existing on the property, but was entitled to take it with him when vacating the premises and allowing the lease to lapse. He apparently took advantage of this clause, for there is no further record of brewing on the Burck property (no mention of the lease was made when the property was sold in 1868) and by 1866 Stoker had expanded his Broad street operation into a "Brewery and Lager Beer Saloon." Stoker & Son's brewery was there, with no mention of the saloon, in 1867. The capacity of this brewery was over 500 barrels per year, for Stoker paid a \$100 Federal brewer's tax for that year.¹¹

Perry and Front Brewery

In the winter and spring of 1868, Stoker built a new house and brewery on his lots at Perry and Front. Three of these lots faced Front street and ran west to Bank alley; the other three continued west from Bank alley to the canal. The house was on Front street, about 150 feet south of the intersection. Frederick Stoker eventually built his house just north of his parents'. The new brewery was a two-story, brick building, measuring about twenty-five by ninety feet, on the west side of and parallel to Bank alley, on the top of the high bank which rose up from the level of the Scioto River and the canal.

Stoker's move in 1868 was probably precipitated in part by the sale of the Broad street property by Mr. Chittenden to the Deshler family.¹² Another reason may have been an act of City Council passed in December of 1864. This act prohibited the cutting and removal of ice from the Scioto River from the Ohio Penitentiary south to the A proposed amendment to city limits. exempt brewers of ale and beer and candle manufacturers from the prohibition had been introduced but defeated.13 As stated above, year-round brewing was begun by the Stokers in 1865, but the cost of hauling ice from outside the city to store for summer brewing may have been prohibitive. The move south to the new location put the brewery near the river, outside of the city limits, as a source of ice.

Within a few months of the new brewery's erection, the Columbus and Hocking Valley Railroad line was laid through the western portion of Stoker's lots, between the brewery and the canal. The railroad was organized primarily to deliver coal from the Hocking Valley mines to Columbus. It soon proved to be of great benefit to the larger Front Street breweries, those located in the present "brewery district." Sidings were built into the City, Capital, and Columbus breweries to deliver coal, barley, and hops and to ship their products to far-flung markets. To a small operator like Stoker, however, the railroad was more curse than blessing. He had no need for a siding, since he could depend on local grains and he



The only known picture of Stoker's brewery at Perry and Bank streets is this faint and stained view of the top of the north end. This happened to survive in the corner of a large photograph taken in 1873. The photo was taken in the large yard of P. Schlegel & Company's City Park Brewery, which was north across Perry street from Stoker's, where the former Jones Heel factory stands. Photo courtesy of Paul Schlegel.

supplied a local market. On the other hand, the railroad made his competitors more efficient and, more directly, sparks from passing locomotives caused at least two fires: in 1872 the Stokers' stable on Perry street was damaged¹⁴ and on July 11, 1879 the brewery building itself was destroyed, though by then it had been closed for some time.¹⁵

The Perry & Front business was a partnership of Stoker and his sons Frederick and Charles. Their beer was advertised in 1873 by John P. Jacobs's wine house on East Town street as "the purest and most honest beer made in the city," though it also was the most expensive.¹⁶ Annual production of the plant was on the order of 600 barrels.¹⁷

During his years in business in Columbus, Erhard Stoker met with a number of serious accidents, which would have discouraged a less determined man. On one occasion he was thrown from a wagon and had several ribs broken; on other occasions he broke an arm and a leg.¹⁸ Later, he was injured when his arm was caught in the machinery at the brewery. On this last occasion his sons were going to send for help, but Erhard said, "No, don't you send for a doctor! Bring me a bucket of salt water." He plunged his arm into the water and cleaned out the shredded flesh himself.¹⁹ He was able to recover from all of these misfortunes and continued to carry on his business up to the time of his death. He was of a quiet, unassuming disposition, but with typical German stubbornness, and was said to have been straightforward and honest in all his business dealings.²⁰ He was at first a member of Holy Cross and later of St. Mary's Parish.

Erhard Stoker died at home, of dropsy, on the morning of July 14, 1875, one day before his sixtieth birthday. His grave at Mt. Calvary cemetery is unmarked, but can be located by finding the tombstones of his grandchildren on the same lot.²¹

Demise of the Business

Stoker had run up about eight thousand dollars in mortgages and other debts in building the houses and in building and operating the brewery. This was comfortably below the almost eleven thousand dollar appraised value of the property.²² However, the panic of 1873 had struck, money was tight, many businesses had failed, and property values were falling. A fire at the brewery on February 3, 1875, caused by sparks from a chimney, may have caused the property value to fall further.23 Even before Stoker had died, on March 19, 1875 a suit had been filed to force sale of the property and payment of the debts. Friederika Stoker was able to hold onto the lots and houses facing Front street by paying over two-thirds of their appraised value at a sheriff's sale in January of 1876. Bidders could not be found at the first appraised value of the brewery. It eventually was sold for just under two thousand dollars.²⁴ It stood idle until destroyed by the fire in 1879.

Stoker's sons Frederick and Charles, who had worked with him, went into other lines of work after the brewery closed. Frederick became in quick succession a guard at the Ohio Penitentiary and then a deputy Franklin County sheriff. About 1879 he was appointed Captain of the Columbus police force. He held this position for four years, during which time he became well-known and popular. He was "an efficient officer and held the respect and esteem of every one who knew him." He lost his position when the politics of city hall changed, but was reappointed when German, Democratic Philip Bruck became mayor in 1887. He died at his home near Schiller and Front on February 19, 1888.²⁵ He was survived by his wife Louisa and daughters Ida and Estella, who resided in that home for many years. (It would seem that Frederick left the Church, for in 1878 his daughter Estella was baptized at Trinity Lutheran Church; and he is buried at Green Lawn Cemetery rather than Mt. Calvary.) He had two daughters but no grandchildren.²⁶

Charles Stoker ran a South High street saloon for two years, but after 1884 he made a final break from the brewing business and took up employment in a railroad yard. He lived with his mother Friederika until her death in 1899 and then lived with his sisterin-law and nieces at Schiller and Front.

Erhard's son Jacob Stoker was a watchman at Seagrave's fire-engine factory and lived on Front Street.²⁷ He and his wife Theresa (Leidenecker) had ten children, among them Jacob Jr. who served in Puerto Rico as a member of Company B, 4th Ohio Volunteer Infantry in the War with Spain, 1898 to 1899.28 He was in Panama during construction of the canal.29 Among their other children were three sons, Edward (Eddie), Herman (Mannie), and Frederick (Fritz) who were employed in the brewing industry as drivers and bottlers at Hoster's. They began working there as boys in the 1890s and continued right up until the prohibition era. Eddie is said to have been strong, like an ox." He would carry the beer kegs into the saloons three at a time -one under each arm and the third suspended on a strap clenched between his teeth. Around 1913 when the City Brewery's stables caught fire, Eddie managed to rush in and save almost all of the horses, but his own team was lost. Soon after the fire, the brewery's wagons and teams gave way to trucks.³⁰ Eddie served in the 352nd Aero Squadron in World War I.³¹ The Stoker family lives on in the Greater Columbus area, now represented by the descendants of Jacob's youngest child, Mrs. Ida Weintritt.

Though Erhard Stoker had failed to firmly establish a family business to pass on to them, he left behind for his descendants "an honest name as a fine inheritance."³²

NOTES

- 1) See the *Bulletin*, Vol. VI, No. 11 (November, 1980).
- 2) See the *Bulletin*, Vol. XVIII, No. 3 (March, 1993), p. 214.
- 3) Schlegel, Donald M., Lager and Liberty: German Brewers of Nineteeth Century Columbus: Columbus: 1982.
- 4) The family's origin in Baden is specified in Franklin Co. Probate Ct., Death Record 1/100; also 1860 census, Columbus, Ward 5, house 468; also the immigration record cited below. Erhard's birth date is calculated from data contained in his obituary notice.
- 5) The Holy Cross Baptismal Register, Aug.
 2, 1860 gives her surname. Glazier, Ira
 A. & P. William Filby, *Germans to America*, Vol. 12; Wilmington: Scholarly
 Resources, Ins., 1990; page 2.

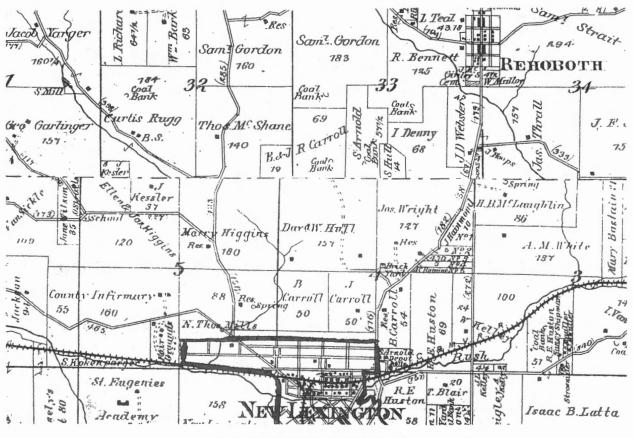
- 6) Franklin County Recorder, Deed Record 68/161
- 7) 1860 Columbus City Directory, p. 114 etc.
- 8) National Archives, Record Group 58, I.R.S. records: Monthly list for December, 1863, Ohio Division 15; Special List for November, 1864, List 4, Ohio Division 15; Monthly list for December, 1866, Ohio Division 14; Annual Lists for 1864 (Dist. 7, Division 13), 1865, and 1866 (both District 7, Division 14)
- 9) Franklin County Deed Records 84/583 and 84/582
- 10) Franklin County Lease Record 1/17
- National Archives, Great Lakes Region, Record Group 58, I.R.S. records, Annual list for 1867, Division 14, District 7, page 196
- 12) Franklin County Deed Record 93/592
- 13) Columbus City Council Journal, Dec. 26, 1864
- 14) Columbus Division of Fire record book, June 11, 1872; the records show another small fire on Feb. 3, 1875.
- 15) City of Columbus, Annual Report for 1879-1880, p. 253
- 16) Ohio State Journal, Sept. 23, 1873
- 17) National Archives, Great Lakes Region, Record Group 58, I.R.S. Records, Annual reports for 1868 through 1872
- 18) Columbus Dispatch, July 15, 1875, p. 3
- 19) Interview with Sophia Stoker Grigsby, June 17, 1981
- 20) Ohio State Journal, July 15, 1875
- 21) Mt. Calvary Cemetery, Holy Cross lot 77-C, north half
- 22) Franklin County Common Pleas Court, Complete Record 43/268; 47/3; 55/251; 56/215; 61/112; and 64/585
- 23) Columbus Fire Dept. records, Feb. 3, 1875
- 24) Franklin County Deed Record 126/204, 130/184, and 135/486
- 25) Ohio State Journal, Feb. 20, 1888, p. 2
- 26) Copy of Trinity Lutheran records at Franklin County Genealogical Society. The author's father, George Schlegel (1909-1981), lived at 930 S. Front as a youth and carried *Der Westbote*. He remembered delivering the paper to the Stokers, and in particular remembered that Frederick's daughter Stella had

married a Jewish man named Abe Goldsmith. What stuck in his young mind was that Mr. Goldsmith was so short that he had to tie blocks to the bottoms of his shoes to reach the pedals of his automobile. Charles and Frederick and Frederick's family are buried on lot 79 north, Section T, Green Lawn Cemetery.

- 27) Columbus Dispatch, Oct. 6, 1918 p. 8
- 28) The Official Roster of Ohio Soldiers in the War with Spain...1916; p. 244
- 29) Sophia Grigsby
- 30) *ibid*.
- 31) Tombstone, Mt. Calvary Cem., Holy Cross G-53 northeast
- 32) Der Westbote, July 22, 1875

Creighton/McCraren Notes

Mr. Theo McMahon, editor of The Clogher Record, journal of the Clogher Diocesan Historical Society, has supplied some additional information on the McCraren family, ancestors of the Creightons of Ohio "The surname He writes, and Omaha. McCraran was still present in Clontibret parish in the baptismal records (1861-1880) in Shanmullagh, Greenmount, Listinny and Annaseeragh townlands. McCraren is often found as a variant of McCarron. The surname McKernan was also prominent in Clontibret with 12 baptisms recorded in the 1861-1880 period. The McKernon surname was also present across the county border in Armagh. In the Tithe Applotment Book for Clontibret dated 1830 the surname occurs as McCrarn, McCrarne and McCraron. Two persons named Andrew McCrarn held famrs in Shanmullagh townland whre each was leasing over 7 acres. Yet another Andrew McCrarne was leasing a farm of 3 acres in Drumgallan townland which adjoins the Co. Armagh border. An Andrew and Michael McCraren are listed among those receiving spinning wheels in 1796 for growing flaxseed in a promotion by the Linen Board. Andrew received one spinning wheel while Michael received 3. The surname Creighton does not occur in any of the early land records.'



HIGGINS FAMILY DATA

The following sketch of the family of Rev. Arthur Higgins, O.P., is taken from A. A. Graham's *History of Fairfield and Perry Counties, Ohio* (Chicago: W. H. Beers & Co., 1883), page 427.

"Higgins, James, was born in 1816 in Pennsylvania; son of Arthur and Mary (Brown) Higgins; he was brought up on a farm, and followed farming all his life, and was very successful. He came to Ohio at the age of fourteen years, with his father, who settled upon the farm now owned by the family of the subject of this sketch. Mr. Higgins was married June 8, 1847 to Miss Ellen McMenomy, born November 1, 1822, in the northern part of Ireland, daughter of Roger and Marjory (McGinley) McMenomy. They became the parents of eight children, viz.: Arthur, John, James, Mary (deceased), Elizabeth, Francis, Stephen and Thomas, deceased. Mr. Higgins departed this life May 13, 1874. His wife, who still survives him, was brought to America when a child, whose parents settled in New York State; at the age of ten years he uncle, Judge McGinley, brought her to Ohio, where she has since resided."

The home farm of the Higgins family on the "Somerset Road", now Route 13, is clearly shown on the map above. This is taken from the 1875 Atlas of Perry County, Ohio by D. J. Lake, C.E. (Philadelphia, Titus, Simmons & Titus; pp. 25 and 37). "Marry Higgins", Father Higgins's grandmother, is shown owning 160 acres in the northeast guarter of section 5, with a residence, and Ellen & Jas. Higgins owned 120 acres in the northwest quarter. Although they lived within a mile of New Lexington, they were said to have lived near Rehoboth, some three miles away by road. This clearly is because they were oriented toward the town where their church, St. Louis Bertrand, was organized in the 1830s, not the nearby county seat, where St. Rose Church was not organized until 1868.

(Dr. Lisska's sketch of Father Higgins will be concluded in the March issue.)

Chillicothe St. Mary's Church Baptismal Register, 1835-1846 (Continued from Vol. XX, No. 1)

1844, continued

same day (Feb. 11), Joseph, born 11(?) Feb., son of Leopold Kelhoffer and Martha Fisher; spons. Joseph Merkly and Agatha Heidelsperger. HDJ

Feb. 12 Henry, born Feb. 2, son of Mathias Berman and Maria Louisa Keller; spons. Ferdinand Bader and Anna Mall(?). HDJ [The god-mother's name was added some time after the original record was made.]

Feb. 18 Carl, born Feb. 2, son of Anton Müller and Sophia Deger; spons. Mathias Berman and Eva Schatz. HDJ

Feb. 22 Henry Ruben, born Jan. 20, son of William Marshall Anderson and Elizabeth Ann McArthur; spons. Ruben Springer and Jane his wife. HDJ

Feb. 25 Egidius, born Feb. 19, son of Egidius Rubel and Elizabeth Schmitt; spons. Martin Rubel and Elizabeth Bermann.

same day Maria Anna, born Feb. 18, daughter of John Eichenlaub and Elizabeth Lind; spons. Lendolin Hess and Maria Lind.

same day Margaret, born Feb. 21, daughter of Caspar Grub and Catherine Geissel; spons. Bartholomew Bürkle and Margaret Bürkle. HDJ

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March 10 John, born Feb. 28, son of Andrew Hermann and Elizabeth Meyer; spons. Jerome Brown and Frances Rihle. HDJ

March 31 Andrew, born March 21, son of John Goeb and Louisa Hans; spons. Andrew Helmutt and Elizabeth Helmutt. HDJ

March 31 William Franklin, born March 17, son of Fridolin Berman and Elizabeth Meyer; spons. Martin Rubel and Elizabeth Rubel. HDJ April 13 Frances, born Nov. 15, 1843, daughter of Bartholomew Rihle and Ursula Burger; spons. Jerome Brown and Frances Rihle. HDJ

April 17 John, born Nov. 13, 1843, son of Michael Sweatmann and Mary Howard; spons. John Cahlon and Elizabeth Linch. HDJ

April 18 Hugh, born Nov. 6, 1842, son of Michael Gibbling and Anna Hess; spons. Francis Royal and Bridget Royal.

same day Peter, born March 7, son of Michael Gibbling and Anna Hess; spons. Thomas Gibbling and Mary Royal.

same day John, born March 7, 1843, son of Francis Royal and Bridget Carthy; spons. Felix Royal and Margaret Royal. HDJ

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April 18 Catherine, born Dec. 25, 1841, daughter of John Harley and Judith Nolan; spons. John Driskel and Mary Gibbling. HDJ

April 21 Ferdinand, born April 12, son of John Jacob Eichenlaub and Carolina Matschler; spons. Christoph Eichenlaub and Amalia Matschler.

same day Catherine, born April 11, daughter of Stephan Zind and Fridolina Degger; spons. Frederick Degger and Catherine Hird. HDJ

May 2 Michael, born March 20, son of Michael Nesler and Catherine Sauerbrunn; spons. Anton Müller and Josephina Müller. HDJ

May 2 Mary, born May 10, 1842, daughter of John Graven? and Elizabeth Helvins?; spons. Roger Cull. HDJ

May 5 George, born April 24, son of Luke Keller and Eva Sauder; spons. Landolin Keller and Theresa Oberer.

same day Frederick Andrew, born April 26, son of John Keller and Catherine Keitz; spons. Andrew Leitter and wife. HDJ May 12 Philip, born May 4, son of Henry Franck and Maria Ober; spons. John Vorst and Catherine Vorst.

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Sixth Sunday after Easter, May 19, Henry, born April 8, son of Michael Kirchner and Helen Vunderli; spons. Fidelis Bucheler and Judith Vunderle. HDJ

May 22 conditionally, Sarah Jane, about twenty years old, convert, daughter of Thomas Doherty and Mary Holman; spons. Helen Connolly. J.B. Eps. Cin'ti

May 26 Maria Catharina, born May 23, daughter of Martin Rubel and Veronica Schmitt; spons. John Korb and Barbara Korb. HDJ

June 6 Elizabeth, born June 2, daughter of Joseph Mathis and Maria Anna Merckly; spons. Bernard Mathis and Maria Merckly. HDJ

June 9 Helen, born May 17, daughter of Thomas Kirchner and Ephemia Meyer; spons. Martin Bauman and Helen Kirchner.

same day Michael, born May 12, son of Patrick Hayden and Ellen Dellenhard; spons. Michael Kirsch and Maria Anna Hechinger.

same day Mary Ann, born Jan. 14, daughter of Patrick Harrigan and Sarah Ann Campbell; spons. Patrick Hayden and Ellen Dellenhard. HDJ

June 11 Thomas, born March 28, son of Samuel Warren and Elizabeth Wendel; spons. William Wendel and Nancy Jones. HDJ

page 63 June 16 Mary Elizabeth, born June 12, daughter of Leising and Ursula Hancks?; spons. Ignatius Hancks and Barbara Schlerret. [There is no given name, not even a blank left for the given name of the father.]

same day Mary Ann, born June 10, daughter of Xavier Meyer and Justina Loffler?; spons. Landelin Hess and Maria Lind.

same day Margaret, born April 28, daughter of Jeremiah Schmitt and Elizabeth Sullivan; spons. William Landers and Johanna Sullivan. HDJ

June 18 Maria Eva, born June 1, 1838, daughter of Denis Eichenlaub and Catherine Winder; spons. Eva Eichenlaub. HDJ

June 22 Mary Ann, born June 18, daughter of Peter Franck and Magdalena Lohrbach; spons. Maria Eisele and David Lohrbach. HDJ

June 23 Philip Heli, born May 14, son of James Forquer and Mary Catherine Bell; spons. Rudolph Siegfried and Margaret Bell. HDJ

July 7 Sarah Catherine, born March 15, daughter of Ellie Alexander Denys and Susan Elizabeth Bell; spons. James Forquer and Rosanna Carville. HDJ

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July 13 I received into the church and baptized a mother and six children: Mary, age 26 years, wife of Richard Ellet Edward Oscar, born April 30, 1833 Martin, born Sept. 9, 1835 Cecilia, born Aug. 27, 1836 Richard Darius, born Feb. 9, 1839 Henrietta, born Jan. 1, 1841 Mary Amanda, born Sept. 27, 1842. Sponsors for the mother and children were Martin Bauman and his wife Mary. HDJ

(To be continued)

Catholic Record Society - Diocese of Columbus 197 E. Gay Street Columbus, Ohio 43215 Donald M. Schlegel, editor

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