

Acknowledgements

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Preface

In the six years since the first edition of Catholicism of the Confederacy, I undertook additional research, spurred on by my family; Constance Renda, a student of Our Lady of Victory Home School, who wrote to me twice with interesting information about Pius IX and Colonel Mosby; and by people (such as Francis Bohan) that I encountered while selling my book who passed along valuable vignettes. In the summer of 2005, my family and I visited many of the locations in Wilmington, Charleston, and Savannah mentioned in the book and gained further insights. As rewarding as those episodes were, I also learned some lessons from which students can benefit.

Well-intentioned people place erroneous or dubious information on the Internet or in books. Consequently, I corrected errors discovered in the previous edition: it is doubtful that the Fr. Lee at St. Matthew's Cathedral in our nation's capital was related to Gen. Robert E. Lee; Ambrose Dudley Mann was a Protestant; the number of Catholic chaplains and generals who served the Confederacy **exceeded** the number cited in the first edition; some of those listed in the roster as Roman Catholic chaplains, based on an decades old reference work, were dropped because they could not be confirmed as Catholic priests, while others were added. Students should always seek independent corroboration. Verification is important because some websites quote verbatim from a website one may have encountered earlier and only by carefully reading the second website does one discover that it lacks independence. Cases in point include websites that repeat information from Wikipedia in such a way that it appears to be independent scholarship rather than hyper linking to Wikipedia.

Information on the Internet can be transitory. Political correctness now afflicts some Catholic websites (e.g., Spring Hill College) that have obliterated earlier descriptions of support for the Confederacy. Some useful websites disappear (e.g., Catholic Field Chapel website). Both developments suggest that students should make copies of what they find on the Internet lest it vanish. Wikipedia takes postings as face value and assumes alert readers will detect and correct errors. That allows casual readers to absorb false data until a knowledgeable reader corrects it. Erroneous data can be intentional or unintentional. One Wikipedia entry, which duplicates the history at a Catholic church website postponed the admission of blacks to segregated seating by at least

29 years. Was this unintentional or because the author wanted to portray the antebellum South in a certain light?

Like a library, the Internet is dynamic, with new material appearing constantly. Periodic visits may yield new data with the same key word search. Do not rely solely upon Google for Internet queries; try other search engines. Librarians can help you conduct research even in an era with Google. I am indebted to the resourceful librarians of the Virginia Room at the Fairfax Regional Library, who helped me mine their excellent collection and obtain two fine books on inter-library loan.

While political correctness is a problem, do not assume that older works are flawless. Some contain unintentional errors while others err by omission. One 1960 book misstated by exactly one month the death of spy Rose Greenhow, while a highly regarded 19th Century book asserted that a prominent Confederate was Catholic, though multiple sources confirmed he was a Presbyterian. Some older books or websites may have neglected to mention a crucial item (e.g., a Catholic connection) from a biography because of bigotry or the author did not consider it germane. Finally, some prominent historians of 1861-1865 lack objectivity.

A book's index can be a godsend, but ask yourself whether the index appears small given the size and scope of the book. If the index seems skimpy, do not rely on the index to find all the interesting nuggets. Fr. Faherty's Exile in Erin illustrates this point. It brims with many interesting facts or persons that are missing from its index and detected only as a result of a thorough skimming or in conjunction with looking up something mentioned in the index.

Many Americans make the mistake of calling the conflict between North and South in 1861-65 the Civil War. The Congressional Record of March 2, 1928, reports Senate Joint Resolution No. 41 wherein Congress recognized the title "War between the States" as the proper title. It was not a "civil war" in that the South never sought to seize control of the government of the United States of America. Instead the South fought for her independence, which is why you will also find the War for Southern Independence employed. The South regarded secession as a reprise of the colonists' struggle to break free of England. The Great Seal of the Confederacy is dominated by George Washington.

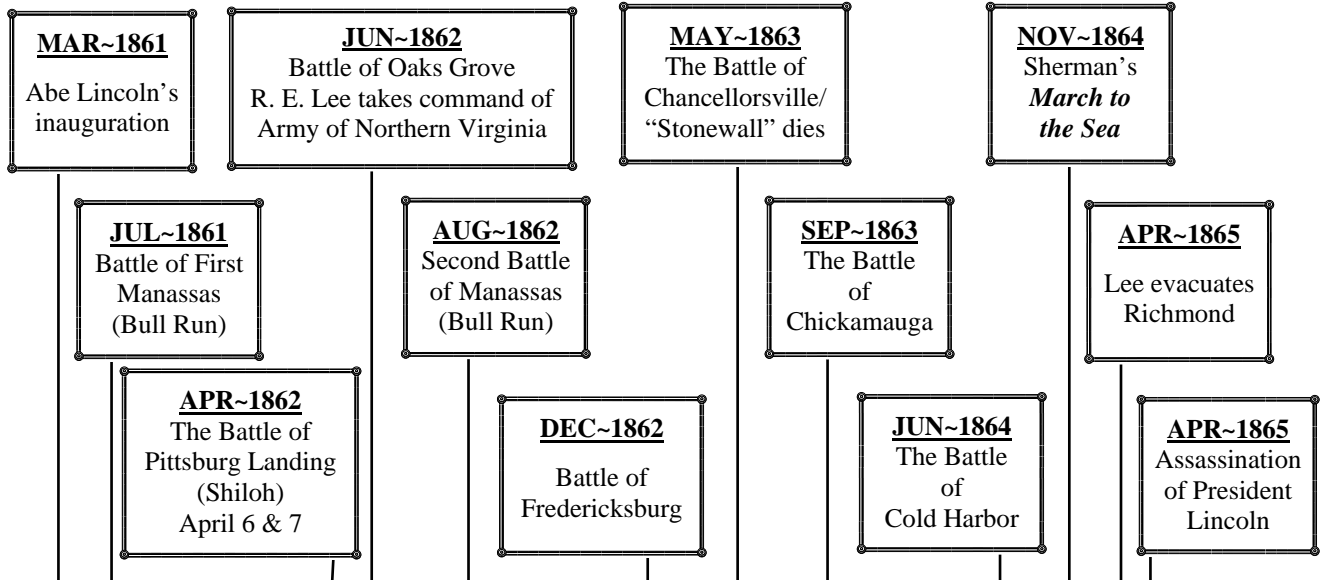
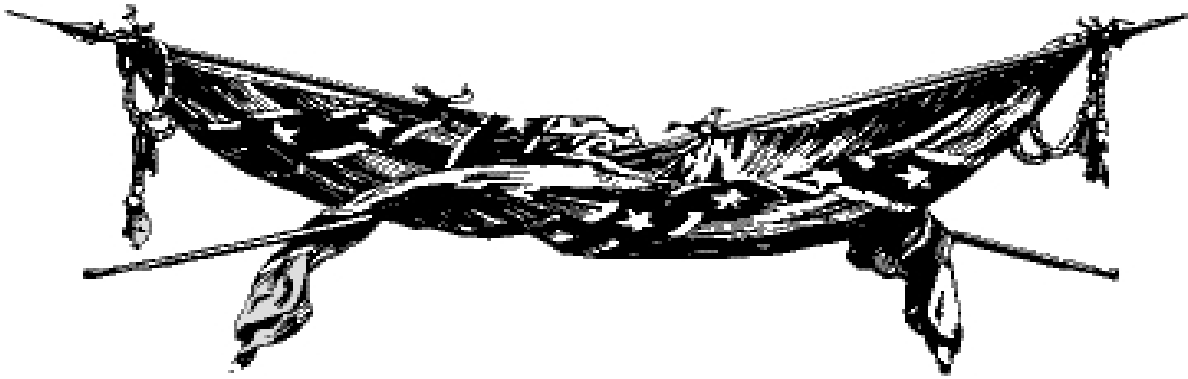
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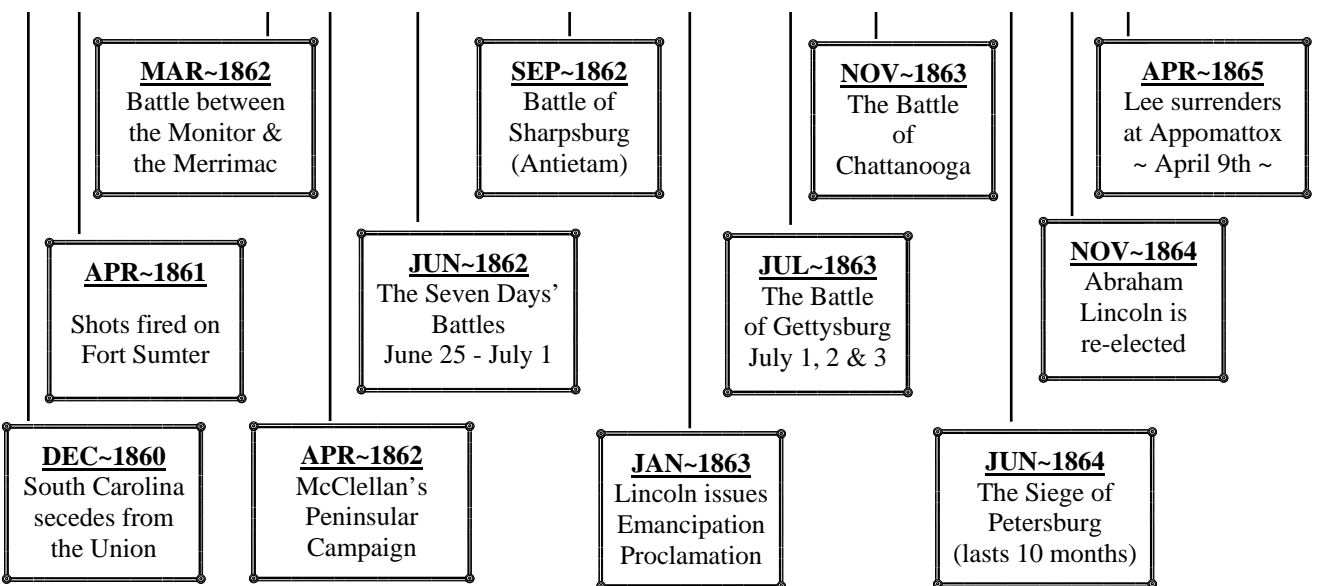


Hood's Confederate attackers put Ward's brigade to flight at Devil's Den — Gettysburg

Catholics of the Confederacy



1860 WAR BETWEEN THE STATES TIMELINE 1865



Catholics of the Confederacy



Roman Catholic Confederates

Introduction

Most Americans do not associate Catholicism with the modern South or that of 1861. Little wonder, when modern politicians portray it as the Protestant-dominated Bible Belt. Present day Roman Catholics must be startled by the depiction of Catholic evening prayers in one of the early scenes in the classic book and movie *Gone With the Wind*. Author Margaret Mitchell mentions the nightly recitation of the Litanies and Rosary by the family of Scarlett O'Hara in her novel, while the film shows them reciting the Confiteor. Whether in the book or the film, the house slaves are depicted as willing participants standing nearby. Some Americans may have heard of Ku Klux Klan attacks on Catholic Southerners in the 1920s and 1930s. Few realize that Southern school children once memorized poems penned by a Southern priest. Even fewer know that Roman Catholic religious and laity rallied to defend Dixie's Land from invading Yankees. In 1861, priests served about 123,000 Roman Catholics at 2,253 Southern churches. Subsequent pages describe the prominent role of clergy, religious, and laity in supporting the Confederate States of America. The names of Roman Catholic Southerners are shown in **bold** lettering when they first appear in the text.

The Antebellum South

Beginning with the colonial era, the True Faith burned fiercely in Roman Catholics from the Border States southward to the Gulf of Mexico. Maryland began as a Catholic colony in 1634 when two Jesuits, a lay brother, and a group of Catholic and Protestant colonists landed at St. Mary's. Father Andrew White celebrated the first Mass in the colonies on March 25, 1634, on St. Clement's Island. Religious toleration reigned as long as Catholics controlled

the colony. Between 1644 and 1691, Protestants gained the upper hand politically and persecuted the Roman Catholics.

After the American War for Independence, the Vatican established the Diocese of Baltimore in 1789. It extended from Georgia to the Canadian border and westward to the Mississippi River. Bishop John Carroll of Maryland laid the cornerstone of America's first cathedral in 1806¹. Sr. Elizabeth Clarisse Lange, a fugitive from Haiti, collaborated with Sulpician Fr. James Hector Joubert to found the Oblate Sisters of Providence, the nation's first religious order comprised of black women, in 1829 in Baltimore. The sisters opened St. Frances Academy, which remains the oldest continuously operating Catholic school for black children in America.



Sr. Elizabeth Clarisse Lange

About 25 miles to the south, in the District of Columbia, the Church welcomed everyone regardless of skin color. According to [The First Negro Churches in the District of Columbia](#), in 1807, three priests connected with Holy Trinity Church, Frs. Van Lomell, Leonard, and Neale, "were all friends of the Negroes, showing no distinction on account of color in the establishment of parish schools and the uplift (sic) of the

¹ Benjamin Latrobe, architect of the U.S. Capitol volunteered to design what became the Cathedral of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

Catholics of the Confederacy

people. The same policy was followed by Father De Theux, who in 1817 succeeded Father Macelroy, who established a Sunday School and labored with a great deal of devotion to bring them into the church. The Catholic Church was free in all of its privileges to all persons regardless of color. This was especially true of St. Patrick's Church under its founder, Father Matthew, who permitted the poorest Negro to kneel at the altar side by side with the highest personages in the land. The same was observed in St. Aloysius Church and in St. Mary's Church at Alexandria. The Catholics were the last to change their attitude toward the Negro during the critical antislavery period of the thirties, forties, and fifties, when the Protestant churches practically excluded the Negroes from their Sunday Schools and congregations. This explains why the Negro Catholics organized in the District of Columbia during the early period only one Catholic church of their own... although the Negro Catholics constituted a considerable part of the Negro population." A church dedicated to free persons of color opened in 1858 under the patronage of Blessed Martin de Porres². The Oblate Sisters of Providence served its parochial school. This school educated black children for many years before they were admitted to the District's public schools.

In 1775, English and Irish Catholics from Maryland moved into Kentucky. French missionary priests joined them circa 1787. In 1808, the Vatican carved three new dioceses out of the Baltimore Diocese. The South received one based in Bardstown, Kentucky³. Bardstown became the hub of Kentucky Catholicism: the Jesuits opened St. Joseph's College in 1819; the Sisters of Loretto built their Mother House in 1824; and the Dominicans established St. Rose (of Lima) priory.



St. Joseph's College

The first shepherd of Bardstown, the indefatigable Bishop Benedict Flaget, arrived June 9, 1811. In November, he and a fellow Sulpician founded St. Stephen's seminary. On Christmas Day, he ordained the first priest west of the Allegheny Mountains, Fr. Guy Ignatius Chabrat. During an 1813 circuit of missions in Indiana, Illinois, and eastern Missouri, he confirmed 1,275 people.

² He was canonized in 1962.

³ The diocese shifted to Louisville in 1841.

Between 1816-1823, His Grace supervised construction of Kentucky's first cathedral, the Basilica of St. Joseph. For many years it enjoyed the distinction of being the largest church west of the Alleghenies. He attended an 1817 rally of 10,000 Catholic Indians in Monroe, Michigan. He consecrated as Bishop of Philadelphia, Fr. Richard Kenrick, who later became Archbishop of St. Louis. In 1848, Bishop Flaget consecrated a young Kentucky priest, Martin John Spalding.

Fearful of the growth of Catholicism in Louisville, evangelical ministers unleashed a series of attacks via the secular press in 1839. Fr. John McGill⁴, a parish priest and editor of the *Catholic Advocate* responded and promptly routed them. After regrouping, the ministers set up a rotating schedule whereby they exchanged pulpits and continued their attacks on the Church. Somehow Fr. McGill learned what they said on Sunday morning and that evening he rebutted them from the pulpit of St. Louis Catholic Church. Oratory enjoyed tremendous popularity then and crowds, often heavily Protestant, thronged to his lectures. Fr. McGill was so effective that public Catholic-bashing subsided for over a decade.

Archives from 1820 record the arrival of Fr. Abell from Bardstown to look after the few Catholics then residing in Nashville, Tennessee. Shortly afterwards, he built the state's first Catholic church on land purchased by Bishop Flaget. This small structure stood on the site of the present State Capitol. The Diocese of Nashville dates from July 28, 1837, having been formed from the Diocese of Bardstown. The consecration of its bishop, Rt. Rev. Richard Pius Miles, occurred at Bardstown on September 16, 1838. He laid the cornerstone of St. Mary's cathedral in 1844. Dominican sisters from Bardstown established St. Agnes academy for young women in Memphis six years later. In 1860, the Dominican Bishop of Nashville, James Whelan, requested the Ohio sisters of St. Mary's⁵ send nuns to Tennessee. They dispatched four nuns, who founded the Congregation and Academy of St. Cecilia in Nashville. A co-foundress, Mother Frances Walsh – who



Sr. Walsh, OP

was then a teenager – chronicled those early days. The school day ran from 8:00 am to 6:00 pm, with an hour for lunch. However, "... there were no studies after supper as it was thought that evenings spent free from all serious application were conducive to health of mind and body." The curriculum emphasized: painting, sculpture, pottery and china, organ, harp, piano, violin, and singing.

In 1818, the Vincentians founded the first seminary west of the Mississippi River. Saint Mary's of the

⁴ A former lawyer.

⁵ Four Dominican sisters from Kentucky went to Ohio in 1830 to establish the community and academy of St. Mary's in Somerset.