



THE CATHOLIC HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Diocese of Amarillo



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Hospital in the Wilderness

Amarillo, we are told, derives its name from the yellow hue of the landscape when summer skies transform spring's luxuriant carpet to a mantle of gold; but when the Sisters went there, no poetic imagination could conjure the luxuriance and still less could it envision the gold. The dustladen winds that grumbled and growled across the trackless, treeless prairies sounded more of an unwelcome band than they did to Coronado and his band of explorers four centuries before. Even St. Anthony the hermit would hardly select it, in his day, as suitable for even his extraordinary penitential spirit, but that is where St. Anthony of Padua and the Reverend David H. Dunn in the designs of Divine Providence led the Sisters in 1900 when Amarillo was little more than a hamlet. There was not a Catholic Church in the vicinity and apparently it was not wanted.

The town of Amarillo was a mission of St. Mary's Parish, Clarendon, Texas, and sixty-five miles distant. When the frail of body but valiant of soul, Reverend D. H. Dunn, born in Queen's Coney, Ireland, but ordained for the diocese of Chicago, came to Texas, June 1900, for his health, he was assigned to St. Mary's parish, Clarendon, then part



The original sanatorium was located at Seventh Avenue and North Polk Street and was built in 1901. At the time, there was no gas heating, electricity, running water, or sewage drainage disposal system. A windmill provided fresh water.

of the diocese of Dallas. Here he met our Sisters who were teaching in St. Mary's Academy, and here he learned that the Congregation conducted hospitals.

Father Dunn, on one of his first trips to the little town of Amarillo, in order to bring the sacraments to the few scattered Catholics, "realized" we are told, "the increasing prominence of Amarillo in size and location". He soon made the acquaintance of Doctor David Fly, and together they seemed to build a rosy future with no more solid foundation, than, possibly, that stranger things had happened. Evidently the two Davids set out to kill the Goliath prejudice and disease; but realizing that they could not do this without Sisters, they hastened to put the case before Reverend Mother Madeleine and her council in San Antonio, with the approval of the Right Reverend Edward J. Dunne, Bishop of Dallas. As an inducement, Sanborn and Glidden offered to donate the site, far removed from any habitation, and they fulfilled their promise. The nearest building was the Fort Worth and Denver depot.



Saint Anthony's Hospital

In the fall of 1900, St. Anthony's Sanitarium, a plain two-story red brick building consisting of twenty rooms, twelve of which were for patients, arose in the wilderness as one of the most pretentious buildings in the locality. The first Mass was said in the chapel by Father Dunn on February 16, 1901, and the winds played the Aeolian harp in thanksgiving. Present were Mother M. Alexis who had gone previously to install Mother M. Cleophas as superior with Sisters M. Conrad, Eugenius, and Winifred as her pioneer co-laborers. The first Catholic institution surmounted by the cross had been planted in the prairie and the first permanent residence for our Divine Lord in Amarillo had been erected. This was a triumph for the Church and a challenge to the bigotry which was present for many a year. Failure was, of course, supposed to mark the effort, but charity knows no failure. The dedication by right Reverend E. J. Dunne, assisted by Father Dunn and the Reverend S. P. McKonnell took place on March 28, 1901, and for this momentous occasion Reverend Mother Madeleine was present. His Lordship, whose territory extended to the boundary of Oklahoma and New Mexico, felt the pride and joy that comes to those who see the frontiers of civilization extended, and greater still must have been the delight of Father Dunn and naturally shared by Dr. Fly. But when the oratory died down and the guests left, the little community felt alone indeed, and patronage, notwithstanding Doctors Fly, Pearsons and Johnson's efforts, was slow in coming, and, we are told that for the first five years there was an average of one surgical operation a month. Many patients, through no fault of theirs, reared in ignorance and prejudice feared to go to a Catholic hospital, and it is related that in more than one instance the patient would not take the medicine until the doctor or Sister had first tasted it. Indeed, in some rare instances, this happened as late as the "mad twenties" when the "yellow sheet" of the "menace" prepared the way for an outburst of bigotry followed by Kluxism. Often the community had to remind itself of Rev. Mother Madeleine's parting, sympathetic words, "Ma petite, have courage! You have Jesus with you; the Incarnate Word will help you! They smiled through their tears as the train took Rev. Mother and Mother Alexis on their south-bound return to San Antonio, then they went back to view the lonely scene and empty house. Father Dunn and Dr. Fly, both lifelong friends tried to cheer them up, but it was to Jesus in the Tabernacle they turned for the strength and fortitude to meet the trials and privations which the coming months

and years asked them to endure. They felt the flow and the glory of lighting the first sanctuary lamp in Amarillo, which like Patrick's fire on the hill of Tara, was never to be extinguished.

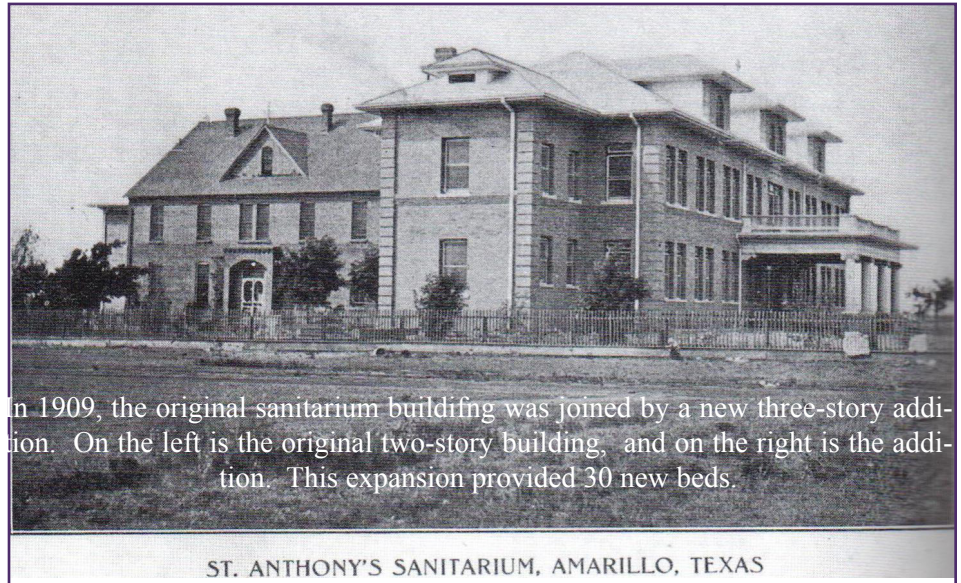
The privations of the first years surpassed in acuteness and aloofness those of the beginning of the Congregation. The hospital had neither telephone, electric light nor sewerage, and no kindly neighbor to help in a crisis. When the freezing winds across the plains froze the pipes for weeks at a time the Sisters had to collect and melt the snow and boil the water to supply the inmates. Often the Sisters were both hungry and cold, and when they trudged the miles to town for the bare necessities of life, the stores refused them credit and would not supply them unless they had cash. To these



deprivations was the added fact that there was no resident priest and so they even lacked the daily Bread of Life, the true sustenance of the Religious. Father Dunn could only come to Amarillo bi-monthly, and then the little chapel became the parish church for as yet none existed. It is related by the Sisters that when they had few patients and little food that Mother Cleophas with one of the Sisters trudged miles

along the railroad tracks to give spiritual food to scattered Catholic families and to instruct them in their faith. For the Sisters were the “fishers” and Father Dunn drew in the net.

In the spring of 1902, Father Dunn moved his headquarters from Clarendon to Amarillo and made his residence at St. Anthony’s until his death in October 3, 1916. Until the present Sacred Heart Cathedral was built, St. Anthony’s was also the residence of his assistant and successor. In the meantime the Sisters went in turn to Clarendon to hear Mass on Sundays. In addition to the consolation of the sacraments and the Holy Sacrifice for which they hungered, they had the comfort of a warm and cheery welcome from the Sisters at the Academy who always had a little bundle of groceries ready for them as “luxuries” to take home. It is on record that on one such occasion returning from the depot in a snowstorm, the Sisters lost their way and wandered for hours before they sighted the hospital, arriving in a condition of almost collapse. Only the utter confidence in the Incarnate Word that He would not permit them to perish, and prayers to St. Anthony to show them the hospital had kept them going and cheerful. In times such as these, and in loneliness of soul, it is not surprising to hear that one day when things seemed even more drab than usual one of the younger members went the chapel, knocked on the door of the Tabernacle and said, “Jesus, are You there... and don’t You know that we are here?” But He was there and heard, and after their agony in the prairie the tide began to turn. The patients and people began to find out that the Catholic Sisterhood was not what bigotry had painted



In 1909, the original sanitarium building was joined by a new three-story addition. On the left is the original two-story building, and on the right is the addition. This expansion provided 30 new beds.

In an effort to dispel the miasma of ignorance the Rev. J. Donnell, C.B.C., delivered a course of lectures for the benefit of non-Catholics on the lawn of the court house early in August 1902 and on the 25th of the same month of the same year, Father Dunn began an eight day mission in the Chapel of the Sanitarium. According to Sacred Heart Parish records, an average of thirty five men attended. Seemingly it was a men’s mission as no ladies are mentioned. No doubt, Father Dunn sent these first missionaries out to the gentile world of Amarillo to spread the truth. Gradually the first little building became all too small; and an appeal was again made to the Motherhouse to erect a new wing to accommodate the staff of doctors who were now settling in the rapidly growing city, and bringing their patients to the hospital.

Reverend Mother Madeleine who went to her reward in 1906 was replaced by Mother M. Alphonse and the appeal was not in vain. At a cost to the community of \$100,000 a handsome two-story building with basement was erected, adding thirty additional rooms with every up to date facility for the care of medical, surgical, and obstetrical cases. This was supposed



First floor ward in St Anthony’s Sanitarium.



to be the last word in hospital buildings in the Panhandle; but the fabulous growth of Amarillo was with the later oil boom and inflation upset all calculation: but debts had to be paid before petitions again got a hearing, no matter how urgently pressed.

In 1926, Amarillo was created into a diocese with the Right Reverend R. A. Gerken as its first Bishop. His Excellency was well acquainted with our Sisters as their former pastor in Ranger, Texas, where they taught in St. Rita's School and conducted Vacation Schools during the summer in the missions attached to his parish. Here he knew Mother Berchmans O'Connor who had since been appointed Provincial of the New Orleans Province and under whose Jurisdiction was St. Anthony's Hospital. His Excellency lost little time in voicing his sentiments of the physicians and people as to the utter inadequacy of the hospital to care for the increased population. In turn, Mother Berchmans laid the case before Reverend Mother Mary John and her administration in San Antonio. At the time an entire new unit was being erected at St. Joseph's, Fort Worth, and both the Provincial and General Administrations were hard pressed financially. However, the need and persuasion eventually prevailed, and in the spring of 1927, the greater St. Anthony's appeared in blue print and ground was broken on the Feast of St. Camillus, patron of hospitals, on July 18, 1926. The cornerstone was laid on the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe on December 12 of the same year by their Excellencies, the Most Rev. R. A. Gerken of Amarillo and the Most Rev. J. P. Lynch of the Diocese of Dallas. Bishop Lynch, in his inimitable style preached an eloquent sermon on the occasion, tracing in outline the history of Charity done by the Church down the ages up to its inception in the Panhandle by the Sisters of Charity of the Incarnate Word. Present were Mayor Bivins of Amarillo the entire staff of doctors and a vast number of friends. The clergy in attendance makes an impressive list, particularly when we recall the good Fr. Dunn, long since gone to his reward, was the lone voice in the wilderness in 1900. Good Dr. Fly who was received into the Church on his deathbed preceded Father Dunn by many years. The Very Rev. Thomas O'Brien of Slaton, brother of the Rev. B. O'Brien then chaplain of St. Anthony's Academy, James Burns, J. Krukert, C. Devorak and J. Roddan. Also present for this happy occasion were Rev. Mother Mary John accompanied by Mother M. Bonaventure, secretary general, and Mother M. William, inspector of hospitals.

The beautiful new four story hospital with accommodation for 125 patients and representing an outlay of \$500,000, was blessed and opened to

the public on May 24, 1928 Feast of our Lady Help of Christians. It was a proud day for His Excellency, the Most Rev. R. A. Gerken and the people of Amarillo; and for the Sisters it was a triumph over almost insurmountable obstacles since the day that they lit the first sanctuary lamp in the Panhandle. Many of the clergy who were present at the ceremony of the laying of the cornerstone were also in attendance at the blessing as well as the very Rev. Monsignor R. A. Nolan and J. S. O'Connor of Fort Worth. Monsignor Nolan was the eloquent speaker of the occasion and in that moment of exultation no shadow of the depression that was to visit the country not many months hence crossed the rosy horizon. Reverend Mother Mary John, Mother William, general inspector of hospitals, Mother Wendelinus, treasurer general, Mother Robert, provincial assistant, and the first pioneers, Mother Cleophas, Sisters Conrad Eugenius, and Winifred, also former superiors, Mother M. Presentation, Timothy

Join us at the Museum
Open House and see the
artifacts from St. An-
thony's Hospital!



Nurses at St. Anthony's Hospital circa 1915

and others were present. The superior of the institution, Mother Mary Lourdes and her community, and the assembled guest saw nothing but sunshine on that happy May day. And who would dim the glory of the achievement? The handsome four-story building, fireproof, with basement, equipped with the latest in science to search and to combat disease and alleviate suffering as much as could be humanly done, stood as a monument dedicated to charity and to suffering humanity in general, and to Amarillans and people of the Panhandle in particular. Already the American College of Surgeons had placed its approval on the institution and its eminent staff of physicians and surgeons; so the onlookers and well-wishers might well have said insofar as the present generation's efforts were concerned, "The end crowns the work." It was on this auspicious occasion that the word, "Sanitarium" was deleted and replaced by Hospital!

The transfer of patients from the old building gradually took place, and it was a matter of pride on the part of incoming patients to be received in the new building, and to add to a birth certificate, "first baby born in the new St. Anthony's Hospital!" The 1909 pretty unit was then renovated and converted into a Nurses' Home with its own spacious grounds, and sufficiently removed from the new building to permit recreational activities without disturbance to patients.

But the almost fatal year of 1929 had not gone very far when shadows be

gan to hover over St. Anthony's... and in fact, over the entire country. The period that will ever be known as the "Depression Era, The Big Bad Wolf," had definitely entered every home. Mother Mary of Lourdes and her community, with a debt that seemed to stand out in red everywhere they looked, had once more to go on voluntary rationing. This was a part of community history, but when they were forced to close down one of the floors, adversity, which is not only the touchstone of character, but the test of faith, once more came to St. Anthony's and did not hastily depart. Nevertheless, during the years that followed, as all the years that went before, free service was never refused to the poor and during the years of '30, '31, and '32 as many as forty men a day came to get a free meal and not one of them was ever hungry. It is a matter of surprise to many how amidst a general cataclysm such as the Depression Era, the institutions belonging to the Sisters survived despite the fact that many were in debt.

The answer is in the real capital on which all religious institutions not only subject but prosper, the voluntary endowment of the lives of its members, their consecration to our Divine Lord Who they strive to imitate in His hidden and laborious life, in an effort to do good to all whether Jew or Gentile.





During the recent tragic World War II, St Anthony's was once more taxed to capacity, but further appeals for expansion have as yet not been responded to, although the need is still very apparent. Almost all rooms have been made semi-private in an effort to meet the demand; that is, two beds were put in rooms where normally there was but one, and patients, by now accustomed to housing limitations, gladly adjusted themselves to existing conditions. Meanwhile many improvements within the building were made.

Foremost among these was the remaking and enlarging of the first lowly dwelling of Our Lord into the recent lovely chapel. When the plans for 1927 building were made, it was hoped that at a future date a separate outside chapel would be constructed but as these hopes faded, Mother M. Thaddeus represented to Mother M. Madeleine, Provincial a plan that was proposed on former occasions, even as early as Mother Cleophas superior, that the half top story, or attic of the 1909 building be raised and extend the walls so as to make the chapel spacious enough to accommodate Sisters, nurses and patients who might attend.

Mother M. William, assistant general, who was replacing our dear, departed Rev. Mother Bonaventure until elections would be held, and believing that Rev. Mother favored the project secured the consent of the General Council. Work was immediately begun and completed in the summer of 1942 at a cost of twenty thousand dollars including equipment. In this improvement and extension, the community room for the Sisters was also enlarged and some private rooms were added.

The new chapel and its liturgical altar were blessed by the Most Rev. Lawrence J. FitzSimon, Bishop of Amarillo on June 18, and was the occasion of the first solemn Pontifical Mass said in the hospital.

The first retreat for Catholic student nurses was held in 1917 by the Rev. B. O'Brien chaplain, assisted by his brother the Rev. Thomas O'Brien. There were but eight Catholic girls in attendance at this retreat, and two of these, namely, Sister Anna Joseph and Sister Benignal became Sisters

of Charity of the Incarnate Word. The year previous, Sister M. Sixtus Doherty, superintendent of the school of nursing had the Solidarity of the Blessed virgin canonically erected. The Reverend B. O. Brien with the approval of the Most Rev. J. P. Lynch, applied through the Jesuit Provincial in New Orleans, Louisiana, for affiliation with the Mother Solidarity in Rome. This document hangs in the chapel of St. Anthony's under to title of "Immaculate Conception" with St. Patrick as patron.

Sister Sixtus, beloved by Catholic and non-Catholic because of her sense of justice coupled with a sense of humor, died from the effects of influenza in 1918, mourned by all. She it was who had all students join in morning prayer. With a smile and a "Don't we all pray to the same God?" she brushed aside any evidence of objection or intolerance, and the custom is maintained to this day. Many a non-Catholic as well as Catholic is glad to slip in on extra occasions to the House of God to talk things over with the only friend for time and eternity. -end-
Fr Bart O'Brien

Father David H. Dunn might very well be called the founder of the Diocese of Amarillo. He laid the foundations very well. If he had not been pastor of Amarillo from 1902 - 1916 it is not very likely that the Diocese of Amarillo would have been established in 1926 when the area was experiencing an oil and gas boom. The Panhandle would probably still have been, as far as Catholicism is concerned, an out post of the Diocese of Dallas.

All people have their saints and heroes. The Catholic people in West Texas may certainly include David Dunn among theirs, and look back to him as an inspiration in building the faith in the future.

Interview with Sister Conrad and Sister Stella

Sister Conrad and Sister Stella came to America in the same year, 1895. The boat on which Sister Conrad sailed arrived first, in New York, from Germany, with 20 postulants aboard. These postulants went to the Leo House to await the arrival of the group from Ireland and France. Their boat came in soon after, with sixteen or eighteen postulants from Ireland and four or six from France. They joined the German girls at the Leo House and from there continued their journey to Texas.

Sister Conrad was born in the Saar district, in Germany, and Sister Stella on a little island west of Ireland, called Balentia. Sister Conrad came to Amarillo with the first group of Sisters, in 1901. She and Mother Cleophas came from San Antonio, and were to meet Mother Alexis at Fort Worth. From there the group would go to Amarillo to open the new house, St. Anthony's Sanitarium. The train from San Antonio was late, but the group from Fort Worth did not wait. They went on ahead and were in Amarillo to welcome the others. Sister Conrad, being young, was very hungry on the train. The Sisters had a lunch with them, but she felt ashamed to eat on the train. She promised herself a good meal when they got to Amarillo. At the Sanitarium they met the delightful hospitality of Dr. and Mrs. Fly, who were occupying a room in the building, and who had prepared a meal for them. However, the dainty little teacups did not hold much, and meal was not quite enough for a hungry young person who had not eaten much all day, so she went to bed hungry the first night.

Mother Alexis and Mother Madeline stayed long enough to see that everything was started and then returned to their duties elsewhere. Mother Cleophas and the three young sisters were left to make the beginnings in the new country. Amarillo was a little town to the south of them. On every side the grassy plain stretched far away to the horizon. It was a cattle country, and frequently the herds of cattle grazed around the hospital building. Patients were very slow in coming. Everybody was poor and people were not in the habit of going to hospitals for treatment. It was discouraging. The sisters suffered at not having Mass and Communion regularly. In the first three or four weeks they did not see a priest.

Father Dunn was stationed in Clarendon and had the whole Panhandle to attend to. He came to the hospital twice a month on Sundays, and less frequently on week days. The Sisters were happy when they heard, shortly before their first Easter in Amarillo, that they were to have a chaplain, Father Burns, and that he would arrive to say their Easter Mass. The day came but the train did not bring Father Burns. He had got off the train at Childress, took a little walk, and the train went off and left him. When he arrived, the next day, it was somewhat disappointing. He did not have the faculties for saying Mass or was too sick to say it. He soon left for California, where he died shortly after.

Sister Conrad was the cook. She and Sister Eugenius and Sister Winifred were all very young, sharing together the newness and the joys and sorrows of the first hospital venture on the Plains. One evening, after three weeks in which they had not heard Mass nor received Holy Communion, they sat out on the back step of the hospital, weeping from the lonesomeness and deprivation of it all. They cried, but Sister Conrad recollected herself. She was the oldest, she thought. She had some responsibility for the others, and this crying would never do. "Let's look up and laugh," she said, pointing to the sky. They looked up to the moon and stars shining high in the sky, and soon all three were laughing.

When Father Dunn moved his headquarters from Clarendon to St. Anthony's Sanitarium in Amarillo in 1902, things were better. They still had Mass only twice a month on Sundays. On the other Sundays and on part of the weekdays he was out over the Panhandle, attending to the missions, but they still had Mass and Communion more often. They looked forward to the days when he would return and they could have Holy Communion in the morning. Sometimes they missed it. One 8th of December he was supposed to be in for Mass. They waited until eleven-thirty, fasting, and then decided to have breakfast and dinner together. Part way through the meal Father Dunn arrived. It was a disappointment only partly lightened when the irrepressible Father Dunn, who had forgotten to bring his cassock home, decided to put on two black aprons beneath his vestments, one behind and one in front.

At Cliffside, about ten miles northwest on the Denver line, lived the Louis Probst family. They came to Mass with horse and wagon, getting up early and traveling while it was still dark, to be on time for Mass. They never missed, - father, mother and little children. A few others came, too, and to share the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass with them was a joy to the Sisters. Sister Eugenius once suffered a disappointment on that score. One Saturday evening she saw figures on the horizon, coming toward the hospital. "Mother," she cried, "come out and look!" "There are people coming for Mass in the morning." But as the Sisters looked, the approaching figures turned out to be a group of cattle, not people coming to Mass.

When Louis Probst was struck by a rattlesnake and the wound proved to be serious, a message was sent to Father Dunn. He started out with horse and buggy, taking with him the Holy Viaticum, and accompanied by Mother Cleophas and one of the Sisters. In the buggy, too, were some supplies that the Sisters thought would prove useful. The group lost their way on the plains, and drove till after dark. Finally reaching Cliffside, they found a desperately sad family. The father lay dying. The mother was in bed with their last child. The Sisters had hardly seen a sadder situation. How grateful Mrs. Probst was for their help then and on other occasions, she never ceased to tell. Everybody was poor then, and the Probsts, too. Certainly the Sisters were poor, but Mother Cleophas managed to have some food or other help that she

shared. In after years Mrs. Probst was a patient at the hospital several times, and so happy to recall the generous offering of Mother Cleophas, "who not only brought nice things to eat, but brought them cooked and ready to serve." The Sisters knew the Probst family through the years. Theresa is still a nurse at St. Anthony's Hospital, and remembers a good deal about the early years. "Mrs. Probst is a fine woman." Sister said. After Mr. Probst's death, his wife sold their land at Cliffside and moved to Amarillo. The Sisters bought one of her horses, Queenie. For years Queenie served at St. Anthony's. On Sundays the Sisters sometimes went riding in the buggy, with Queenie to draw them. A favorite trip was down to the lake. In those days the plains were covered with beautiful wild flowers. "Don't you want get out and pick some flowers," Mother Cleophas would ask.

"Oh, yes," and the Sisters climbed down to pick some of the lovely things. In the meantime Mother Cleophas and Queenie and the buggy started on, and the sisters would cry out and run after them.

"Those were happy times," said Sister Conrad.

The Sisters' revenue was very small, and occasionally they went on trips to collect money for the hospital. Railroad building was brisk at that time, and the workmen who built the roads were always generous to the Sisters. When the road was being built from Amarillo to San Angelo, Sister Conrad accompanied Mother Cleophas on such a collection trip. They reached the end of the line, where the men working, and interviewed the foreman of the crew, for of course they wouldn't want to go around collecting among the men without his consent.

"You go around to the men and ask them how much they want to give you," said the foreman, "and I will take it out of their wages." So it was done. A mealtime intervened while the Sisters were there, and they were invited in to the boxcar for dinner. "It was a good dinner," said Sister Conrad. "They even had mashed potatoes."

Somewhat later Sister Stella also had the experience of going on a collection tour. That was when the road was being built into Sweetwater. Mr. Ken Smyer was working in the office of the Santa Fe in Amarillo then, and obtained many favors for the Sisters from Mr. Starkweather. Mr. Smyer would tell the Sisters where the construction crews were working and arrange for the Sisters to go there.





The Sisters take a boat ride in Palo Duro Canyon.

It was after such a trip that Sister Stella came back to the hospital to find several traveling salesmen sick in bed in the hospital. It was summer, and the flies were tormenting the men. Sister Stella was distressed, but Father Dunn knew what to do. Downtown he went, got a bolt of mosquito netting, came back and got out his hammer and nails. In a short time each traveling salesman had a frame over him, covered with mosquito netting, and the fly plague ceased.

Father Dunn once came to the relief of some typhoid sufferers. Not an orange could be found in town to give them a drink. The Denver train pulled into town and Father Dunn, whose mission trips along the line gave him a wide acquaintance among the railroad men, persuaded the butcher on the train to sell him a few oranges.

During those early years an epidemic of pest broke out. To the side of the hospital building stood the laundry. The doctors conceived the idea of making this the pest house, to isolate the patients. They asked Sister Blaise, who agreed at once without waiting for permission from Mother Superior. Mother found the doctors and Sister Blaise moving the equipment out of the laundry. Sister Blaise insisted on being the nurse, and was isolated with the patients. Food for them was prepared in the hospital. Father Dunn would take it out and set it down a safe distance from the "pest house". He then retired, and Sister Blaise came out to get it.

Sister Blaise was the champion money collector among the Sisters. For many years she did nothing but collect money for the orphan asylums. She loved her orphans, and feared nothing. She could take any insult, as long as she got money for the orphans. .

Throughout the years the sisters have found loyal doctors to support them. The first, of course, was Dr. D. R. Fly, who welcomed them to Amarillo. For some time Dr. and Mrs. Fly lived in a room at the hospital. They later built a big home. They had no family, and Mrs. Fly rented some of her rooms to such as professional men, who found it difficult to find a good place to stay. There was hardly more than one good hotel in Amarillo at the time, the Amarillo Hotel. Mrs. Fly was Elizabeth Miller, of a prominent family in Dallas. Dr. Johnson was also very good to the Sisters.

There was boy at the hospital about 1911 named Val, under the tutelage of Father Dunn and a ward of Archbishop Blenk of New Orleans. He

was there for some time, and Mr. Smyer got him a job with the Santa Fe. Sometimes Val drove the surrey for the Sisters. One day two of the Sisters got into the back seat for a trip to town. Val had to go back into the house for something and slammed the door behind him. That was a signal for the horses to run. They started to town, with the Sisters in the back seat and no hold on the reins. Pel-mel they went, the frightened Sisters clinging to the seat and to each other. They came to a stop in front of the Amarillo hotel, with no harm done to anyone.

Father C. J. Bier came to Amarillo in 1909 and acted as assistant to Father Dunn. Father Bier, too, had lung trouble and came south for his health. The two men were the closest friends. There was still no rectory in Amarillo, and the priests made their home at the hospital.

The fact that when Fr. Dunn came to Amarillo eighteen years ago, there was only one church for Catholics in eighty-two counties and that at the hour of his death, twenty-six churches had been built to honor the true God and that priests had multiplied from one to fifteen in the same space of time. Father Dunn's heroic labors, traveling as an average to twenty-two of his missions monthly was also carefully noted. His many sacrifices in going about the immensity of the plains, sleeping on the hard ground or perhaps in the hut of a Mexican, living out of the nickels that these would proffer or else faring hardly better in the habitations of the pioneers of the Plains was made prominent in the eulogies pronounce or written about him; and yet, these are only fruits of a principle that actuated the whole life of Father Dunn; and that principle was God's charity.

“Father Bier was a prince,” said Sister Stella, “an exemplary character.” He was full of humor, too, and everyone enjoyed his company.

One bad winter day Father Bier was called to White Deer on a sick call. “You wouldn’t send a dog out in such weather,” said Sister Stella. Father pulled his hat down on his head as he prepared to step out the door.

“Don’t you have one of these caps that pull down over your ears?” asked one of the doctors, who was standing by. He didn’t have one. A little later the doctor met John McKnight down town. When Father Bier returned from the sick call he found two or three of these caps waiting for him at the hospital, of different types or sizes. John McKnight had sent them up, with instructions to Father Bier to pick out a couple that he liked best and keep them for such trips as he had just made.

Father Bier had that happy characteristic of being very grateful for everything that was done for him, and that was one of the reasons why everyone liked him so well. When after a few years he announced that he was returning to the Milwaukee diocese, it saddened everyone, and particularly Father Dunn. “It was like a funeral in the hospital for two weeks,” Sister Stella said.

Sister Conrad was stationed at St. Anthony’s from 1901-1905 or 1906. She was at Fort Worth at one time, and came back to St. Anthony’s off and on until 1933, when she came back to stay until the present time.

Sister Stella finished her nurses’ training in 1905, but at that time she had tuberculosis and the Mother General was in doubt as to where to send her. She considered Corpus Christi. “If you send her to Corpus Christi,” said the doctor, “she probably won’t come back. If you send her to Amarillo, she may come back.” To Amarillo she came, for two months and then was sent to Fort Worth for treatments from Dr. W. R. Thompson. She came back to Amarillo in 1907 and has lived a long, useful life.

Once Fr. Dunn found that he had left behind the altar breads which were necessary for the Communion service. He asked the woman who owned the boarding house for flour, water, and an iron. He then proceeded to make the unleavened bread. The landlady had been watching and said, “Well, I’ll be switched if I ever see a man make flapjacks like that again.” Father Dunn had a good sense of humor, and incidents like this appealed strongly to him, helping to lighten the fatigue of his traveling.

Thank you for your
Generosity!

FAUSTINO SAPINARIO

The history of St. Anthony’s Hospital would be incomplete without a passing tribute to the wandering Italian harpist, Mr. Faustino Sapinario familiarly known to the Sisters, priests and doctors at Saint Anthony’s as “SAP”

This unique and unlettered character, who could play any melody he once heard, first made acquaintance with our Sisters when he called at Immaculate Conception Academy, San Angelo one morning and asked “Sis for lil coff” ---Mr. Sapinario to his dying day never pronounced more than half an English word. Sis told the superior, who happened to be Mother Edmund. On her interrogation she found out

that he was a wandering minstrel in need of breakfast. She saw that he got a cup of coffee and a sandwich. That act of kindness, perhaps, in his hungriest hour, Faustino Sapinario never forgot. And soon a statue of the Madonna” was Mother’s reward; and many a statue of the Madonna he gave to St. Mary’s and St. Anthony’s, for when he found out that we had other houses in north Texas he simply annexed himself to them without further introduction.

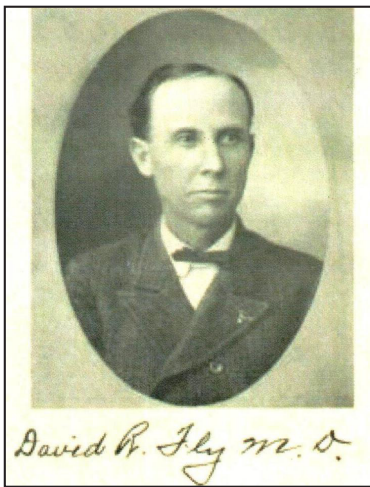
He made his money chiefly by playing at hotels and restaurants. With all his lack of sense and book knowledge he had clever ways of helping himself. If someone wrote a letter for him he would have the letter read back to him and then take to someone else to re-read it. If there was a difference in the text, then there was a “Sapinario storm” in the Panhandle. He was often threatened with “eviction” from St. Anthony’s when he became somewhat unruly. On such occasions he would go to the “Sis” at St. Mary’s where he got a domicile in the cottage. When he grew repentant he would return with a new “stat of Santa Tony or Santa Jo, if they already had his beloved Madonna, as a peace offering.

One cause of some of the storms was that Mr. Sapinario never dressed decently, and when the Superior of St. Anthony’s bought him a new outfit, he wouldn’t wear it unless he was sure that no one would remark, “Oh, Sap, you’re getting rich” – for well-dressed Sap could make no “mon” and the harp would be idle on his shoulder.

When sister Faustina of St. Mary’s, who he never knew died, at St. Anthony’s, he insisted on getting the cross for the new plot. She was the first Sister buried in Amarillo. He imagined that she was named after

him, and on the day of the funeral he was dressed in his best and in everybody's way to the chagrin or amusement – even at such a time -- of those who knew him or did not. It was even feared that at the last moment he might don a surplice and mingle with the priests.

But the day came when "Sap" had to put his beloved harp aside forever, and priests, sisters and doctors gave every help and comfort to the wandering minstrel whom, we hope, heard angels playing the harp as he knocked at St. Peter's Gate.



DAVID RICHARD FLY, A. M., M. D., physician and surgeon of Amarillo has made a conspicuous success in his profession, and his reputation is by no means confined to the immediate locality of his practice, for he is well known throughout North and Northwest Texas. His principal accomplishment from a public standpoint, perhaps, has been his exploiting of the advantages of Amarillo as an ideal place, climatically considered, for the cure of tuberculosis, and to this dread white plague he has devoted a large portion of his professional investigation and study. He is author of the phrase "vampire disease," as applied, so fitly descriptive, to tuberculosis. He is known as the principal promoter of the St. Anthony's Sanitarium at Amarillo, an institution which has

already enjoyed much success and undoubtedly has as large range of usefulness before it. Dr. Fly has a large private practice in medicine and surgery, and is one of the most progressive and energetic Aesculapians in the state. Besides the large spheres of work implied in the above statements, he has done much toward effective organization of his professional confreres and the promotion of the esprit de corps so essential to any class of men whose lives are devoted to work largely outside of selfish pursuits.



ST. ANTHONY'S SANITARIUM, AMARILLO, TEXAS.

Headquarters of Rt. Rev. Bishop Lynch During His Visit to the Panhandle.

Saint Anthony's Sanitarium, conducted by the Sisters of Charity of the carnate Word, is an institution of which Amarillo is justly proud. The building is of pressed brick, and cost 25,000. The Sanitarium is situated on a slight eminence about half a

mile from the business center of the city, and on the North Plk line of the street railway.

In Saint Anthony's Sanitarium there are fifty beautifully furnished rooms and two wards, affording accommodations for nearly 100 patients. The equipment and appliances of the operating rooms, with their

natural and artificial lighting effects, are not surpassed in many places in the United States. In all other departments the facilities and equipment are of the same high order of excellence, rendering Saint Anthony's one of the most thoroughly esteemed sanitariums in the Southwest.



Laying of the cornerstone on addition to St. Anthony's Hospital on February 11, 1949 by Bishop Laurence J. Fitzsimon



A newly formed nonprofit is the new owner of the old Baptist St. Anthony's Hospital property.

The historic hospital property, which is located at the intersection of Amarillo Boulevard and Polk Street, was donated to St. Anthony's Legacy and Redevelopment Corp.

The nonprofit is comprised of a group of Amarillo residents, many of whom live in the North Heights neighborhood. Its goal, according to a news release, is to continue the intention of the previous owner to see the property once again become a vital part of the Amarillo area.

"St. Anthony's Hospital was an anchor institution in Amarillo for nearly a century, and countless residents of the Panhandle have been impacted by the services and jobs it provided," said Mary Emeny, the president of the SALARC board, in a prepared statement. "It is a privilege to begin the work of bringing new opportunities and resources to the surrounding communities through this iconic property."

According to the group its mission is to invigorate and revitalize underserved communities in Amarillo through entrepreneurial activity, education, social and cultural events, and human services. It wants to start with the neighborhoods around the hospital. SALARC is working closely with the North Heights Association on plans for the property.

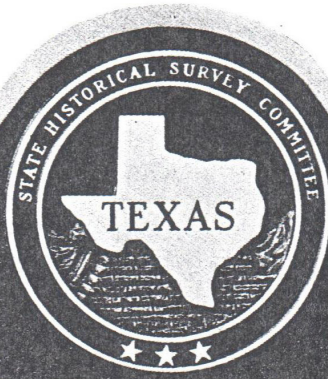


Sister Thadddeus Byrne was administrator of St. Anthony's Hospital from 1941 to 1947. She was also a good friend of Bishop FitzSimmon.



Sister Annette Pezold was director of Spiritual Care at BSA Hospital and the last of the Incarnate Sisters to leave Amarillo. Sister left in 2009. The Incarnate Word Sisters were in Amarillo for over a hundred years.

Mary Emeny, president of the SALARC board is the granddaughter of Wm. H. Bush, who donated the land that St. Anthony's Sanatorium was built on.



FIRST HOSPITAL ON THE HIGH PLAINS OF TEXAS
ST. ANTHONY'S HOSPITAL
FOUNDED 1901

THIS MARKS SITE OF POTTER COUNTY'S FIRST HOSPITAL ORGANIZED BY SISTERS OF CHARITY OF THE INCARNATE WORD ON INVITATION OF FATHER DAVID H. DUNNE, PASTOR OF ST. MARY'S CHURCH IN CLARENDON, TEXAS, AND DAVID FLY, M. D., AMARILLO. LAND WAS DONATED BY WM. H. BUSH.

FOUR SISTERS OPENED HOSPITAL AS ST. ANTHONY'S SANITARIUM. ORIGINAL BUILDING (DEMOLISHED IN 1955 TO MAKE ROOM FOR PRESENT SCHOOL OF NURSING) WAS A 14 ROOM RED-BRICK STRUCTURE WITHOUT GAS, ELECTRICITY OR TELEPHONE SERVICE.

A 2-STORY ADDITION IN 1909 PROVIDED THIRTY BEDS AND AN OPERATING ROOM. DESPITE HARD TIMES, A SCHOOL OF NURSING WAS ALSO OPENED THAT YEAR. IN 1922, A THIRD STORY WAS ADDED TO 1909 BUILDING. PRESENTLY USED BY THE SISTERS AS A CONVENT.

IN 1927-28, ANOTHER ADDITION ENLARGED FACILITIES TO 100-BED CAPACITY AND PROVIDED A LABORATORY, DELIVERY ROOMS, X-RAY ROOMS, AND MORE SURGICAL SUITES. A THIRD ADDITION IN 1949 BROUGHT TOTAL CAPACITY TO 150 BEDS.

A \$2,000,000 ADDITION IN 1960 MAKING ST. ANTHONY'S A 250-BED GENERAL HOSPITAL WAS MADE POSSIBLE BY FUNDS RAISED BY THE AMARILLO AREA FOUNDATION.

(1966)

In April of 1967, this Texas State Historical Marker, commemorating the establishment of St. Anthony's as the first hospital on the High Plains of Texas, was dedicated by Mrs. Caroline Bush Emeny, the daughter of William H. Bush who donated the land for the original hospital.

Patients began to seek out St. Anthony's Hospital during an epidemic of typhoid in 1907. The sisters took responsibility for nursing the patients, and the general public began to realize the devotion of the sisters. St. Anthony's Hospital went on to establish the area's first nursing school, cardiac unit, and hospice facility.



Vintage Beck Lee Corp. EKG machine, Gomoc Vacuum and 1940 table from the operating room are on display in our St. Anthony's Hospital area of the museum.



Come see what exciting changes have been happening at the museum.
Join us for the open house, Thursday, July 25th.



February 12, 2019 to May 17, 2019

CONTRIBUTIONS

Amarillo DCCW	200
Martha Lee Babb	20
Lanny & Rita Bezner	150
Florence Brofft	25
J. Thomas Campbell	25
Marlene Casanta	500
Marlyn Commons	50
Jim Jordan	50
Msgr. Norbert Kuehler	300
Tim & Ludi Martin	100
Kathrine Monceballez	25
Albert Quinto	25
Howard & Joan Raef	25
Jane Roberts	50
M/M Richard Rouillard	5
Eunice Schilling	50
Lawrence Schmucker	20
Don White	100
Leo and Audrey Wink	<u>250</u>
Total	1970

MEMBERSHIP

Florence Broft	25
Mike Harter	20
Howard and Joan Raef	25
M/M Smothermand	25
Ron & Jan Weishaar	<u>50</u>
Total	145

HONORARIUM

IN MEMORY OF:

For St. Lucian Windows in memory of Manny Villasenor by Maida Villasenor	25
In memory of Sr. Pacifica FMI by Orville R. Blum	<u>50</u>
Total	75



Valuable and coveted books written by Fr. Stanley, donated to Museum by Willie Faye Huseman.



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Rev. Francisco Perez

Rev. Scott Raef

Doris Smith

Don White



You may stop by daily (Monday through Friday) to view the museum, for a guided tour it is recommended that you make an appointment.. The museum is open by appointment for church and school groups. This includes evenings and weekends. Susan: 383-2243 Ext. 120 or even better: sgarner@dioama.org

You're Invited To...

A Night at the Museum



Thursday July 25
6 pm To 8 pm

4212 N.E. 24th Ave., Amarillo, Texas

Renovations, New Displays, New
Artifacts, and Artifacts from the old St.
Anthony's Hospital, Refreshments, Fun.
No charge.

Diocese of Amarillo
Museum Open House

Susan Garner
sgarner@dioama.org
806-383-2243