

## The Naming of Troy, Indiana

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Writers of local Indiana history have not been able to account for the naming of Troy, the original county seat of Perry County, Indiana. Lacking certain knowledge based on fact, they have advanced fanciful conjectures. Thomas J. de la Hunt, having made such a conjecture, says "it is unknown to whom the name owes it being . . . and its sponsorship has never been claimed."<sup>1</sup> The author of *St. Pius Parish, Troy, Indiana*,<sup>2</sup> likewise could not trace the naming of Troy. Yet, strange to say, it was the publication of this little centenary history that brought to light the information sought for so long. Two grateful clients of Judge Alexander Troy, Salisbury, North Carolina, in appreciation of professional service he had rendered them and as a token of their esteem for him, proposed that the county seat of Perry County, whither they had immigrated from North Carolina, be named after him—a proposal that was accepted by the other settlers.

This fact came to light in the following manner: Years ago a young lady, Agatha Lindemann, of Troy, became a member of the Community of the Sisters of Charity of Nazareth, Nazareth, Kentucky, where she is known as Sister Alberta. An elderly member of the same Community, Sister Denise Troy, manifested special joy over the arrival of the novice from Troy because, so she told her, that town was named after her grandfather, Judge Alexander Troy. Recently, on receiving a copy of the centenary history of her home parish and reading therein about the lack of information concerning the naming of her home town, Sister Alberta wrote to the author what Sister Denise had told her about it years ago. The author, in turn, obtained the details from the aged Sister, now a nonagenarian.

Judge Alexander Troy, Salisbury, North Carolina, had two sons, Matt Troy, a doctor and the father of Sister Denise, and Daniel Shipman Troy, a lawyer. The entire family was

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<sup>1</sup> Thomas J. de la Hunt, *Perry County, A History* (Indianapolis, Indiana, 1916), 9.

<sup>2</sup> Albert Kleber, *St. Pius Parish, Troy, Indiana, Centenary History, 1847-1947* (Troy, Indiana, 1947).

Protestant, and the men were also Masons. Moreover, a journal kept by Daniel Shipman Troy states that he was in sincere accord with "the Know-Nothing movement against foreigners and particularly against Catholics."<sup>3</sup>

The two brothers moved to Alabama, where Sister Denise was born in 1858. Upon the death of her father, in 1865, her uncle, Daniel Shipman Troy, took a fatherly interest in his little orphaned niece. He would often speak to her about their family history, especially about her distinguished grandfather, in whose honor, he told her, two towns were named. One was in Perry County, Indiana, the other in Dallas County, Alabama. The name for the Troy in Indiana had been proposed by two of her grandfather's appreciative clients who had emigrated to what was then "the far West."

The author knows of at least one early settler of Perry County, Thomas Bolin, who hailed from North Carolina, but there is no record available to show that he was one of Judge Troy's two clients who proposed to name the new town Troy.

Finally, a critically inclined historian might wonder how the little girl with her not only thoroughly Protestant but even anti-Catholic background came to join a Catholic Sisterhood. Colonel Daniel Shipman Troy, who had risen to the military rank of lieutenant colonel by reason of his distinguished service in the Confederate Army during the Civil War, was shot through the breast just above the heart as he was leading his men in an attack upon a Federal position in 1865.<sup>4</sup> When the victorious Federals were about to bury him, one of them detected a faint sign of life in the body. They carried the grievously wounded man to the field hospital where, contrary to all expectation, he began to recover. Still in a critical condition, he was transferred from the field hospital to the Lincoln Hospital in Washington, D.C., where Sisters of Charity served as nurses. It was the first time the Colonel had seen Catholic Sisters, and his preconceived notions of them and of the Catholic church made him a keen observer. He

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<sup>3</sup> "Out of the Whirlwind," *The Messenger of the Sacred Heart* (New York, 1897- ), LXXXII (1947), 36-42, 44-50, for quotation see page 48.

<sup>4</sup> *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies* (70 vols., Washington, 1880-1901), Series 1, XXXI, part 1 (1890), 452, 535, part 2 (1890), 659, part 3 (1890), 617, XLII, part 3 (1893), 1242, 1368, XLVI, part 1 (1894), 233, part 2 (1895), 1273, part 3, (1894), 220, LII, part 2 (1898), 563, Series 2, IV (1899), 231.

noticed also that representatives of the fraternal secret society that he himself had joined occasionally visited the patients, but that they came to befriend only those whom they found to be members of their society. The Sisters, however, showed preference only for cases of greater suffering, and that with constant kindness. In his journal he states that "it was not long that it began to dawn on me that the Sisters of Charity were putting into actual practice the teaching of the Savior, which I had long regarded as guides for human action, but far beyond human reach."<sup>5</sup> He further notes that when he returned to the South at the conclusion of the war, after prolonged prayerful thought and study, he and his wife entered the Catholic church on April 20, 1868.<sup>6</sup> Other members of the Troy family followed their example. Thus did Catholicity come into the Troy family and thus did the little girl come to be the Sister of Charity who as a nonagenarian was to bring to light the story of the naming of Troy, Indiana.

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<sup>5</sup> "Out of the Whirlwind," *The Messenger of the Sacred Heart*, LXXXII, 48.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, 50.