



"Cherryfields," on St. George's River, St. Mary's Co., Md., birthplace of Fr. John C. Fenwick, O.P., and Col. Ignatius Fenwick, the father of Bishop Edward D. Fenwick, O.P. It was from here that Father, later Bishop, Edward D. Fenwick wrote Archbishop John Carroll announcing his arrival in the United States. See Bishop Fenwick's Life, page 87.

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A MARYLAND GENEALOGICAL STUDY

VICTOR FRANCIS O'DANIEL, O.P.



IN THE PROVINCIAL ARCHIVES, which are presently at the Dominican House of Studies, Washington, D. C., is a cardboard file marked "Fenwick Wills, etc." It contains digests of Fenwick, Cole, and Taney wills, together with notes and comments, that were made by the sub-joined writer and used in what he considered, and still considers, a rather thorough study in order to ascertain and establish the parentage of Father John Ceslas Fenwick, O.P., and his nephew, Father (later Bishop) Edward Dominic Fenwick, O.P. The former, the reader likely knows, was the first English-speaking American to become a Dominican priest; while the latter was the second and the founder of Saint Joseph's Province, the only one the Friars Preacher had in the United States for many years. Both were natives of Maryland. John Ceslas was born about 1759; Edward in 1768. Accordingly, their births date back before the American Revolution, for independence from England. They belonged to the best Catholic families in the old Lord Baltimore Colony.

What led to an investigation of the aforesaid wills was an earnest request from Archbishop Henry Moeller of Cincinnati, Ohio, for a biography of Bishop Edward Dominic Fenwick, who was the first ordinary of that diocese. The archbishop wanted the life for the celebration of the diocese's first centenary, which fell in 1921. Hugh Boyle Ewing of Lancaster, Ohio, who married Henrietta Smith, a niece of Father Nicholas Dominic Young, O.P., and a grandniece of Bishop Fenwick, had written something of a genealogy, or family tree, of the Fenwicks and

Youngs of Maryland. Although in manuscript, this document had been copied by various parties, and had become quite well and widely known. It had been studied by the one to whom the writing of Bishop E. D. Fenwick's life was entrusted. Unfortunately, it might be said, it had been used in a number of "write-ups" of the good bishop west of the Alleghany Mountains; and everything in it had been taken as absolutely true and certain by the readers in those parts, the undersigned included.

But, when he began his task, he soon found Ewing's genealogy very inaccurate, to say the least. Ewing makes Ignatius and Maria (Ates) Fenwick the parents of Father John Ceslas Fenwick, the bishop's uncle; and (Colonel) Ignatius and Eleanor (Neale) Fenwick the parents of Bishop Edward Dominic Fenwick. However, when study for a life of the bishop was started, it was soon learned that all the Marylandia touching on the matter said the bishop's mother was Sarah Taney. Thus the bishop's mother, so to express it, was lost almost from the start. All writings about him, whether in the east or in what is now the near west, declared that his father was Colonel Ignatius Fenwick of Wallington, a true Maryland patriot in the American Revolution. A brief consultation of the Fenwick family trees in the office of the Daughters of the American Revolution, Washington, D. C., showed about all the ladies with Fenwick blood in their veins wanted to be descended from Colonel Ignatius Fenwick. They had him married to so many women that his record almost equaled that of Brigham Young.

For this reason, it was concluded that the wills, etc., of Saint Mary's County, Maryland, the home of the Fenwicks, would be the only means of solving the problem. The good Jesuit Fathers of Leonardtown, the county-seat, offered the warm hospitality of their home while the search was under way. They also suggested enlisting the aid of Madge Fenwick, whom they called a "pillar" of their church, and said she was well known and highly respected by everyone in the town. She was more nearly related to the three Jesuits, George, Enoch, and Benedict Joseph (bishop of Boston) Fenwicks, than to the two Dominicans, John Ceslas and Edward Dominic Fenwick. The Jesuit Fathers of Leonardtown also informed the searcher that Miss Fenwick was just completing many long years in a study of the wills and other records of Leonardtown in order to make out a family tree of her line of Fenwicks, and would be glad to help with the proposed work.

So it happened, and with great assistance to the would-be writer of the life of Bishop Edward Dominic Fenwick, which later received no little praise. A long, hot summer was spent, with Madge Fenwick ever on the "job," in looking up and making digests of the numerous Fenwick records of every kind in the Leonardtown court-house. The will of Ignatius Fenwick of Cherryfields (dated January 24, 1776, and probated October 8, 1776), naming among his many children "my son, John Fenwick," and leaving him property, provided he does "not take to a religious life"; and the will of James Fenwick, a son of Ignatius Fenwick of Cherryfields (dated January 31, 1806), obliging *his* son, Athanasius Fenwick, to "support and maintain my brother, the Rev. John Fenwick, at his demand, with house, home and all the necessaries," proved beyond all doubt that Father John Ceslas Fenwick, O.P., was a son of Ignatius Fenwick of Cherryfields and his wife Mary of Saint Mary's County, Maryland. It may be noted here that the writer of these lines has seen the house in which Father John Ceslas Fenwick was born. It stands on Saint George's River, some fifteen or sixteen miles from Leonardtown, is in a state of perfect preservation, and is said to have been built by his father with brick brought from England, like many houses of the Maryland of that day. One may still call it a mansion, and it still bears the name of Cherryfields. Ignatius Fenwick of Cherryfields was a son of Ignatius and Eleanor (Clarke) Fenwick of Piney Point, a part of Saint Mary's County where Saint George's River empties into the Potomac River. The writer has also visited that locality, in which now stand a number of summer homes.

Letters of Father (later Bishop) Edward Dominic Fenwick to Father (later appointed the first bishop of New York) Luke Richard Concanen, O.P., Rome, showed that Father John Ceslas Fenwick, O.P., a son of Ignatius Fenwick of Cherryfields, was an uncle of Edward Dominic Fenwick, O.P. But the will of Ignatius Fenwick of Cherryfields mentioned no son Ignatius among his many children. How then could Edward Dominic's father be an Ignatius Fenwick, if Ignatius Fenwick of Cherryfields, as his will indicated, had no son Ignatius? That was the question which now confronted the searcher. It looked as if the statement, found everywhere, that Bishop Edward Dominic Fenwick was a son of Colonel Ignatius Fenwick of Wallington was certainly an error. So the bishop's parentage, as regarded both

his father and his mother, seemed to be lost. No solution of the problem was apparent in Leonardtown.

Accordingly, the records in The Land Office, Annapolis, the state capital, seemed to be the only hope of settling the question. There the Redemptorist Fathers gave the research worker warm hospitality while the task was under way. All the digests of wills, notes, etc., taken in Leonardtown were carried to Annapolis for comparison with the documents there, as well as to expedite the business. Here Mrs. Margaret Hodges was encountered at the very start. It was fortunate. A genteel and well educated Episcopalian lady from Saint Mary's County, Maryland, she had spent over thirty years in the study of early Maryland genealogy and family history in the records of The Land Office at Annapolis. Having the documents almost at her fingers' tips and anxious to help anyone on things pertaining to her native state, she at once inquired about the purpose of the writer's visit, offered her services to do all she could, and set herself to showing him where to find what he needed, or even to getting it herself. Thus, together with the digests, etc., brought from Leonardtown, the work went along rather rapidly, requiring only a few weeks. First, everything pertaining to the Fenwicks was consulted and compared with what had been found in Leonardtown. But nothing in the Fenwick documents proper was discovered to prove who was the father of Bishop Edward Dominic Fenwick.

The will of Ignatius Fenwick of Cherryfields mentioned his wife Mary, and often his children's "grandfather Cole." This showed that this Ignatius Fenwick's wife was Mary Cole. Accordingly, a careful study of the Cole wills, digests of some of which had been made at Leonardtown, was then undertaken. Presently, it was noticed that Edward Cole of Saint Mary's County, in his will (dated March 6, 1761, and probated December 21, 1762), mentioned "my daughter, Mary Fenwick," and left a large estate to "my grandson, Ignatius Fenwick." This document solved the problem. The wife of Ignatius Fenwick of Cherryfields was Mary Cole, daughter of Edward Cole; and the splendid property bequeathed by Edward Cole to "my grandson, Ignatius Fenwick," was the reason why Ignatius Fenwick of Cherryfields did not mention his son Ignatius in his will (dated January 24, 1776, and probated October 8, 1776), for he already had much more than he needed. And it may be noted that Edward Cole's will shows bequests of lesser amounts to his Fen-

wick grandchildren who were evidently younger scions of Ignatius Fenwick of Cherryfields and his wife, Mary Cole—and even some things to others who might be born after Edward Cole's death. This is why Ignatius Fenwick of Cherryfields, in his will, often mentions what has been left to his children by their "grandfather Cole."

Mrs. Hodges knew the history of the Fenwicks and Coles quite well. But she did not recall just then that Colonel Ignatius Fenwick of Wallington, the father of Bishop Edward Dominic Fenwick (she rather insisted on this relation between these two), had not been mentioned in the will of his father, Ignatius Fenwick of Cherryfields. When the above reasoning was laid before her, reviving her memory, she accepted the conclusion very readily. The court-house at La Plata, Charles County, was visited next, for it was known that the will of James Fenwick, a son of Colonel Ignatius Fenwick of Wallington and a brother of Bishop Edward Dominic Fenwick, was there. It is dated September 3, 1823, and was probated October 14, 1823. Among its bequests is one of a hundred dollars "to my brother, the Right Rev. Edward Fenwick, Bishop of Cincinnati." That, of course, clinched the proof that Colonel Ignatius Fenwick of Wallington was the good bishop's father.

But to return to Annapolis. As has been seen, it had been proved to the satisfaction of both Mrs. Hodges and the writer that Colonel Ignatius Fenwick of Wallington was the father of Bishop Edward Dominic Fenwick—as she had always understood, but had forgotten for the nonce. However, the bishop's mother had not yet been found. Accordingly, the statement that she was Sarah Taney and a posthumous child, which the writer had seen several times in Marylandia, now started a search for Taney wills. One of a Michael Taney of Calvert County, Maryland, was soon discovered. It is dated February 4, 1743, and was probated March 20, 1743. It appoints Sarah, his beloved wife (evidently his second wife), executrix, and leaves her her portion and something extra, if she does not marry again. It also bequeaths property to son Michael and daughter Dorothy "Brooke" who were certainly grown and of age. A proviso declares that, should his wife have another child by him, he or she is to have his or her portion of the estate. This document started Mrs. Hodges' mind and memory working at once. That was late in the afternoon, just before the doors of The Land Office were to be closed. That night, as she promised to do, she looked

over the notes she had at home. The next morning she soon brought out records showing that Sarah Taney, the widow of Michael, did have the expected child, that she was called Sarah (after her mother), that she married Colonel Ignatius Fenwick of Wallington, and that she became the mother of Bishop Edward Dominic Fenwick.

The present writer then remarked: "So the bishop came near having no mother." "That's certainly true," replied Mrs. Hodges. She said further that she knew that the bishop's mother was a posthumous child, but had forgotten it for the time being. She also said that Sarah Taney, the bishop's mother, belonged to the same family line as Roger Brooke Taney, once the Catholic chief justice of the Supreme Court of the United States. Although the document hunter made no detailed study of the Taney wills in The Land Office, he had seen enough to show that her statement was very likely correct. Judging by the way he went at searching for records, she asked him if he had ever been a lawyer, or at least had studied law; for, she said his method was precisely that of a lawyer. When he told her that his preparation was long study and teaching of rigid and thorough scholastic philosophy and theology which teach one how to think straight, she replied that, whatever the preparation, it was certainly excellent. And, it may be added, her help in settling who was really Bishop E. D. Fenwick's mother, Sarah Taney, leaving aside her assistance in other matters, certainly shortened the writer's task by at least several days.

Shortly afterwards, when the digests of wills, etc., that had been collected were spread out on a large flat desk, the genealogy of Father John Ceslas and Bishop Edward Dominic Fenwick simply rolled out of them. That was done in Washington, D. C. A little later, on invitation, the writer visited Mrs. Mary Smith in Frederick, Maryland. Her husband, Francis F. Smith, was descended from Captain John Smith, a brave Catholic who had fought on the side of the Maryland patriots during the War of the American Revolution in the historic Maryland Line. Captain John Smith married Elizabeth Fenwick, a daughter of Ignatius Fenwick of Cherryfields, a sister of Father John Ceslas Fenwick, and an aunt of Bishop Edward Dominic Fenwick. Mrs. Smith had written (over the name of Mrs. Francis F. Smith) an article on Captain John Smith for the *Records* of the American Catholic Historical Society of Philadelphia (1899, Vol. 10, pages 328 following). Finding that she had made a mistake

in regard to some of the Fenwicks, she had, at great cost, got Mrs. Catherine (Costigan) Dorsey, a Marylander and an expert and professional genealogist living in Washington, D. C., to make out a family tree of the Fenwicks. Hearing that the writer was engaged on a life of Bishop Edward Dominic Fenwick, Mrs. Smith invited him to come and see Mrs. Dorsey's family tree (in manuscript) and another which the Brents and Plowdens, into whose families Fenwicks had married, had had compiled by a professionalist, and then got printed. Taking along his own genealogy, he soon found, to his no little delight, that it agreed to the letter with the two just mentioned.

Mrs. Smith still had the correspondence between herself and Mrs. Dorsey on the Fenwicks. It showed that Mrs. Dorsey, like the present writer, had had great difficulty in unraveling the lineage of Colonel Ignatius Fenwick of Wallington because he was not mentioned in the will of his father, Ignatius Fenwick of Cherryfields. One of her ideas, or suspicions, was that, as Colonel Ignatius Fenwick of Wallington was a very wealthy man [for that day], his father, Ignatius Fenwick of Cherryfields, feared the English, should they be successful in the American Revolution, might confiscate his property, if he had too much—especially as he was taking such an important and prominent part on the side of the Maryland patriots. He was an outstanding colonel in the "Maryland Militia."

Finally, Mrs. Dorsey told Mrs. Smith how she had at last, and in an unexpected way, solved the problem. Only a few days before, she went to Baltimore and looked over papers in the possession of the Brents. [These papers, we understand, have been lost in a fire]. There she saw a statement over the name and in the handwriting of Ignatius Fenwick of Cherryfields himself, saying that he did not mention his eldest son, Ignatius [that was Colonel Ignatius Fenwick of Wallington], in his will (1776) because he had already been abundantly provided for by his grandfather Edward Cole. This document, of course, taken in consideration with what had been discovered before, settled the question as to who was Bishop Edward Dominic Fenwick's father once and for all.

Mrs. Smith lived with her son, Doctor Meredith Smith. During dinner on the second and last day the writer was there the bells of Frederick set up a wild and merry ringing. That was to announce that the Germans had asked for an armistice, denoting the end of World War I. This, the reader need hardly

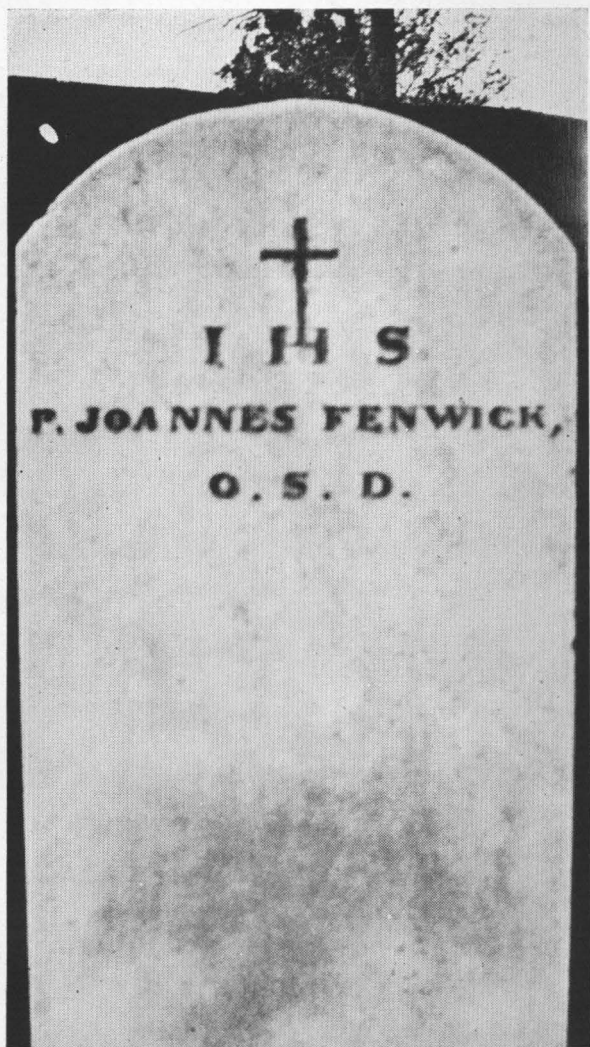
be told, was on November 11, 1918. The next morning, after having spent some months in search of the parentage of Father John Ceslas Fenwick and Bishop Edward Dominic Fenwick, the writer returned to Washington, D. C., absolutely convinced that he had solved his problems beyond all doubt, and resumed his work on the bishop's life with renewed hope and energy.

It may be noted here that in the records of their wills at Leonardtown, Maryland, the two great Fenwicks principally considered in these pages are called, respectively, "Ignatius Fenwick of Cherryfields" and "Colonel Ignatius Fenwick of Wallington." In those early days many of the estates, or plantations, in Maryland had names. The recurrence of the same names of property in the Cole, Fenwick, and other pertinent wills was of great help in determining the family connections and genealogy.

It is noteworthy that, in times past at least, "write-ups," or mentions, of Bishop Edward Dominic Fenwick in and around Ohio tell how his pious widowed mother sent him, when a young boy, to the college of the English Dominicans, Holy Cross, Bornhem, Belgium, so that he could be educated under Catholic auspices. However, the will of his father, Colonel Ignatius Fenwick of Wallington (dated March 16, 1784, and probated April 6, 1784), shows that the mother died first, for it mentions no wife. Besides, it appoints "son, James Fenwick," sole executor of the estate until "son, Edward" (the bishop), becomes of age; and then Edward is to be co-executor. So it was not the bishop's widowed mother who sent him to Bornhem. More likely his uncle, Father John Ceslas Fenwick, drew him there.

Father John Ceslas Fenwick (the bishop's uncle) was a young fellow at the Bornhem college, when *his* father died; and he was thinking of joining the English Dominicans. That is evident, for, as has been seen, his father, Ignatius Fenwick of Cherryfields, in his will (dated January 24, 1776, and probated October 8, 1776) leaves something to "my son, John Fenwick," provided he does "not take to a religious life;" while the will of James Fenwick, a son of said Ignatius Fenwick of Cherryfields, obliging his son Athanasius to "support and maintain my brother, the Rev. John Fenwick," should he "demand" it, shows that "son John" of Ignatius Fenwick of Cherryfields did "take to a religious life."* Accordingly, as Ignatius Fenwick of

* Athanasius Fenwick was left the "Cherryfields" estate by his father, James Fenwick, a son of Ignatius Fenwick of Cherryfields. Athanasius died intestate in 1823 or 1824. He seems to have been married twice, and to have



Tombstone of Fr. John C. Fenwick, O.P., S.T.Lr., at St. Thomas', Chapel Point, Charles Co., Md. Fr. J. C. Fenwick was the first English-speaking American to become a Dominican Priest, and the first English-speaking American Priest to obtain an academic degree.

Cherryfields died before his wife, Mary (Cole) Fenwick, John's mother was a widow while he was a student at the Bornhem college contemplating becoming a Dominican in the English Province, as he did the very next year. So it is easy to see that the story of Father John Ceslas Fenwick's early inclination to the religious life and the priesthood became "switched over," in the course of years, to his nephew, Bishop Edward Dominic Fenwick—possibly because of his noted piety and missionary labors and greater dignity. However, to say the least, Father John Ceslas Fenwick seems certainly to have been as big a man as his saintly nephew, Bishop E. D. Fenwick. Father John C. received no miter. Bishop Edward D. accepted one only in obedience. Completing his theology at the Priory of Saint Thomas of Aquin, the English Province's house of studies in Louvain, Belgium, Father John Ceslas Fenwick received the Dominican Lectorate in Sacred Theology. He was the first English-speaking American priest to be honored with an academic degree.

It has also been seen that the Fenwick genealogy got up by Hugh Boyle Ewing of Lancaster, Ohio, says that Eleanor Neale was the mother of Bishop Edward Dominic Fenwick. In reality, as the wills clearly show, Ann, not Eleanor, Neale married Edward Cole, and was the grandmother of Father John Ceslas Fenwick, and the great-grandmother, not mother, of Bishop Edward Dominic Fenwick. That was as near as the saintly prelate got to the Neales. The same wills just as plainly reveal that Mary Cole, not Maria Ates (as says Ewing), was the mother of Father John Ceslas Fenwick.

had but one child by his first wife—a daughter who married William Coad. In this way, it appears certain, the historic estate passed into the hands of Coad. A good part of it, including the mansion built by Ignatius Fenwick of Cherryfields (Father John Ceslas Fenwick's father), still continues in the Coad line and name, unless there has been a change in late years.

About the time James Fenwick made his will (January, 1806), in which he enjoined his son Athanasius to take care of James' brother, Father John Ceslas Fenwick, in case of necessity, the Friar Preacher was scheduled to go to Kentucky and collaborate with his nephew, Father (later Bishop) Edward Dominic Fenwick, in starting the Province of Saint Joseph. But, at the earnest request of Archbishop John Carroll of Baltimore, the faithful missionary was left to continue his labors in Maryland, and to live with the Jesuit Fathers at Saint Thomas', Chapel Point, Charles County. This he did until the end. He never went to live with his nephew, Athanasius Fenwick, in the Cherryfields home-
stead, where he was born. He died at Saint Thomas' on August 20, 1815, and was buried in the priests' cemetery by the side of the little church. The writer has seen his grave a number of times, and has a picture of his tombstone in the archives. There is also a photograph of the old Cherryfields mansion in the provincial archives. Bishop Edward Dominic's father, Colonel Ignatius Fenwick, was also born there. For the death and burial of Bishop E. D. Fenwick see pages 424-426, 435, 437, 440-441, 442 of his life by the present author.

As is commonly known, the Fenwicks of England were among the outstanding families of that country, and were among those who remained the most steadfast in their adherence to the Catholic faith during the long, dark days of persecution. Cuthbert Fenwick, the progenitor of the patronymic in Maryland, belonged to that noble and distinguished line. He joined the Lord Baltimore colonists, largely for the sake of his religion, and was one of those who came on the Ark and the Dove, landing in Saint Mary's County, Maryland, in 1634. He soon became one of the leading men of the colony. In these pages the writer passes over the long English Fenwick line, and gives only the American, or Maryland, lineage of Father John Ceslas and Bishop Edward Dominic Fenwick—uncle and nephew.

FATHER JOHN CESLAS FENWICK, O.P.

- I—Cuthbert Fenwick and his second wife, Mrs. Jane (Eltonhead) Moryson.
- II—Richard Fenwick, of Cuthbert, and his second wife, name unknown.
- III—Ignatius Fenwick of Piney Point, of Richard, and Eleanor Clarke.
- IV—Ignatius Fenwick of Cherryfields, of Ignatius of Piney Point, and Mary Cole.
- V—Father John Ceslas Fenwick, of Ignatius of Cherryfields.

BISHOP EDWARD DOMINIC FENWICK, O.P.

- I—Cuthbert Fenwick and his second wife, Mrs. Jane (Eltonhead) Moryson.
- II—Richard Fenwick, of Cuthbert, and his second wife, name unknown.
- III—Ignatius Fenwick of Piney Point, of Richard, and Eleanor Clarke.
- IV—Ignatius Fenwick of Cherryfields, of Ignatius of Piney Point, and Mary Cole.
- V—Colonel Ignatius Fenwick of Wallington, of Ignatius of Cherryfields, and Sarah Taney.
- VI—Bishop Edward Dominic Fenwick, of Colonel Ignatius of Wallington.

It is remarkable how often the given name of Ignatius is found among those of the patronymic in Maryland. It shows their fidelity to the Catholic faith, and the intimate relations they had with the Jesuit missionaries. The many, scattered here and there, whom the present writer has found claiming, or trying to claim, descent from the first American Cuthbert (there were a number so called) and, through him, connection with the Fenwicks of the Lord Baltimore Colony, the "Old Line State" of the American Revolution, reveal how the name and reputation of the original progenitor have been preserved and spread through the country.