

CHAPTER XXXIII

THE QUEEN OF PEACE SEMINARY

With the decline of the golden era of the country hotel business during the middle decades of the present century, Shattuck Inn, with its proud tradition of having served generations of New Englanders and hundreds from outside the area, was put up for sale in 1952. It had been operated by Edmund C. Shattuck who died in 1933 while wintering in Florida and previously by his mother, Rachel (Cutter) Shattuck, wife of Edmund P. Shattuck. The original building was burned in a disastrous fire on June 19, 1909. After that Edmund C. Shattuck built a new and more pretentious building to accommodate the increasing number of guests. Previously known as the Shattuck Farm, it became Shattuck Inn in 1910, when on July 1 it was opened for business with a hundred guests to celebrate the occasion.

Following the death of Edmund C. Shattuck it was operated by his son-in-law and daughter, George S. and Eleanor (Shattuck) Austermann, under the supervision of the widow of Edmund C. Shattuck, Helen E. (Spofford) Shattuck, until changing conditions and economic factors made the decision to dispose of it unavoidable. It was then bought by the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary and an account of its new use as a religious retreat is furnished by Reverend Rene Gaudin, S.S.C.C., as follows:

QUEEN OF PEACE MISSION SEMINARY

In the year 1952 the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary bought the Shattuck Inn property. From then on until 1954 it became the minor seminary in the training of young men for the priesthood of the Catholic Church. This consisted of four years of high school and two years of college. The seminary was named in honor of the Blessed Virgin Mary under the title, Queen of Peace Mission Seminary.

In 1954 the faculty and minor seminarians moved to Washington, D.C. From that house in Washington, D.C., the faculty and seminarians of the house of theology came to Jaffrey. This consisted of a four-year course. In 1955 they were joined by the house of philosophy from Wareham, Massachusetts. This is a two-year course which is also the last two years of college. Then in 1966 the philosophy department moved to the Congregation's house in Winona,

Minnesota. The Queen of Peace Mission Seminary remained the house of theology until the summer of 1969 when the community moved to Washington, D.C. Then the property was put up for sale. One priest and two lay-brothers remained to maintain the property until its sale.

The priests and brothers (seminarians) with a few exceptions did all their own maintenance, repairs, renovations and improvements as well as adding more buildings. They built a large recreation building of wood for the students that included a stage for their many productions. Near this building they put up three hand-ball courts. With their own bulldozer they enlarged the pond for skating and later made a rink just for the hockey players. A small field across the road from the main buildings was enlarged for use as a ball field.

The brothers assisted a professional stone-mason in building an outdoor shrine to honor the Queen of Peace. The center of the shrine held a life-size white marble statue of the Queen of Peace. Many services were held there like Sunday Benediction and departure ceremonies for the young priests going to the missions.

In 1958 the priests and brothers started building a chapel of concrete and laminated arches. The lower floor consisted of four classrooms and a library. The corner-stone was laid in 1962.

While the fathers and brothers of the Sacred Hearts were in Jafrey, besides the teaching and studying at the seminary itself, they reached to many parts of the state and out of state to help others by their preaching, teaching, counseling, and many works of goodwill and public relations.

Every year the priests and brothers contributed a large portion of the blood donations to the Red Cross. They pitched in to fight the forest fire on Mount Monadnock to the point of having to stay overnight on the mountain. Some brought down an injured mountain climber when the mountain was covered with ice and the weather extremely cold. This, of course, was done with risk to their own safety.

Many things were done to help the local community and others as well as individuals and families in need. Some of these things consisted in temporary helping to feed and clothe a family and give a burned out family a truck load of furniture. Many other acts of love were done for their neighbors (their fellow men). Most of these have been forgotten by the fathers and brothers but not by the neighbors.

Many, many people over a wide area expressed their sorrow when the community moved out of Jaffrey. This expression of love was very much appreciated by the fathers and brothers. They enjoyed living in Jaffrey very much. The most important function of a seminary is to give the best possible training to young men for the priesthood. The congregation did not have the sufficient number of qualified teachers to do this. By joining the coalition of seven other religious orders of the Catholic Church each other contributed several teachers to form one large seminary. In Washington there are many other aids toward this higher education such as the Catholic University of America.