

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

For NPS use only

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**

received **MAY 29 1985**  
date entered

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*  
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

**1. Name**

historic St. Bernard Church and Cemetery

and/or common St. Bernard's Church and Cemetery

**2. Location**

street & number Intersection of County Rts. 20/6 and 17/2  not for publication

city, town Camden  vicinity of

state West Virginia code 54 county Lewis code 041

**3. Classification**

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational	<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

**4. Owner of Property**

name Diocese of Wheeling - Charleston

street & number 1300 Byron Street

city, town Wheeling  vicinity of state West Virginia 26003

**5. Location of Legal Description**

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Lewis County Courthouse

street & number Center Avenue

city, town Weston state West Virginia 26452

**6. Representation in Existing Surveys**

title N/A has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records

city, town state

# 7. Description

<b>Condition</b>		<b>Check one</b>	<b>Check one</b>	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site	
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved	date <u>N/A</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed			

## Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

St. Bernard's Church is located at the intersection of county routes 20/6 and 17/2 on a scenic ridgetop in the remote and rugged hill country of Courthouse District, Lewis County, West Virginia. The large white frame church building and adjacent cemetery, encircled by a shoulder-high cast iron fence, present striking contrasts against the gray and green forested slopes of the neighboring countryside. The site of the church was selected in part because it commanded a magnificent view of the district from a level tract along Loveberry Ridge, roughly between Loveberry Run and Rock Run, at the forks of two secondary dirt roads. In 1962 a geodetic survey bench marker was placed in the stone foundation at the northwest corner of the church; it records the elevation of the site at 1227 feet above sea level.

St. Bernard's Church is a rectangular gable-roofed, one-story frame structure with a two-story entrance bell tower. The simple but well-carpentered features of the one-room church are Gothic in design; the lumber and interior woodwork were milled from local timber stands. The principal decorative elements of the building are the ten pointed-arch, stained and leaded glass windows which contain dozens of rectangular leaded came surrounding marbleized glass panes in hues of green and yellow. The apex of the windows is enriched with panels of gold and green glass depicting stylized castellated and Gothic forms. The bottom panels of the windows contain memorial inscriptions.

The builders of St. Bernard's were local carpenters who fashioned a substantial but simple edifice; their skill with wood is worthy of note. The exterior walls and three-tier bell tower are covered with cove siding. Corner boards of sizeable width resemble pilasters. Of special interest are scroll brackets which embellish the shallow eaves. At the rear elevation, a round window (with a stained glass cross) in a finely molded frame is centered in the facade of the gable end wall beneath partial return cornices. The church rests upon a foundation of quarry-face, sandstone blocks which exhibit a subtle reddish coloration.

The interior of St. Bernard's is finished entirely in native oak. The oak paneling and woodwork has been varnished on only one occasion, but it retains an excellent patina that is enhanced by the glow of soft golden light that permeates the sanctuary on a sunny day. The sanctuary is commodious; it is one of the largest one-room church spaces in Lewis County. At the head of the sanctuary and axial with the center aisle is a white painted and carved Gothic-style altar whose pinnacles rise to the height of the round window centered in the rear wall. Flanking the entrance to the nave are confessionals, also of Gothic design. Above the entrance to the sanctuary is a choir loft or balcony that is no longer used.

The cemetery of St. Bernard's Church is located southeast of the church building on a slightly rolling tract containing approximately one and a half acres. Encircling both the church and the cemetery is a shoulder-high cast-iron fence of post and spike design that was erected soon after the church was built. Entrance to both the church and cemetery grounds is provided by an ornate, two-leaf cast-iron gate. Above the gate is a

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cast-iron arch which is surmounted by a crucifix and contains the openwork name "St. Bernard" and the date "1910." Within the cemetery grounds are dozens of stone monuments and memorials of marble, sandstone, granite and limestone. The variety of carved designs and symbolic ornamentation form an important local cultural resource relative to 19th and early 20th century funerary art. Draped urns, tassled cushions, floral arrangements, fingers pointing heavenward, and hands holding flowers or crucifixes are some of the themes represented in stone carving and typical of mourning and funeral expressions once popular in Victorian America. The monuments also exhibit important inscriptions relating to the origins of the area's 19th century settlers, many of whom came from Ireland. Numerous Irish counties are mentioned in the epitaphs.

The most important of the cemetery's monuments is the one marking the grave of Father Thomas Aquinas Quirk (1845-1937), builder of St. Bernard's, and a legendary figure in central West Virginia. Father Quirk is buried in the shadow of a monumental cast metal calvary that is painted white; the memorial has occasionally been mistaken for marble. Over the grave lies a monolithic polished slab of gray granite with the inscription:

"Sacred to  
The Memory of  
Right Rev. Monsignor  
Thomas A. Quirk  
Born Mar. 7, 1844  
Ord. Aug. 31, 1870  
Died Sept. 12, 1937  
May He Rest In Peace"

Few changes have impaired the integrity or setting of St. Bernard's Church. The building and immediate grounds survive much as they were planned in 1909. A slight modification of the structure occurred when the open belfry of the tower was enclosed with louvered panels earlier in this century. A minor alteration of the interior fabric followed when liturgical changes required removal of the sanctuary's Gothic-style chancel rail.

# 8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

1884; 1909-1910

**Specific dates** 1849 **Builder/Architect** Al Arnold, architect

**Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)**

Mr. Puffenberger, general contractor

St. Bernard's Church and Cemetery are significant because they are the focal points of much of the life's work of Thomas Aquinas Quirk (1845-1937), a Roman Catholic priest who achieved widespread recognition and acclaim for his religious, social, and humanitarian services to an entire region of central West Virginia for a period of over a half century. The simple white-painted, frame church, often referred to in local history as the "Little Cathedral of the Wilderness," is equally significant as a prominent surviving building associated with the 19th and early 20th century settlement of the Loveberry-Cove Lick-Camden-Murray Settlement areas of Lewis County, West Virginia, by Irish immigrants.

Among the earliest settlers of central and southwestern Lewis County, West Virginia, were Irish Catholic immigrants who entered the region in the 1830's and 1840's following a network of roads and turnpikes whose construction, providing ready employment for workers, was necessary to internal improvements in Western or Trans-Allegheny, Virginia. The Staunton and Parkersburg Turnpike (1824-1847) which passed by Weston, the principal town of Lewis County, was an example of this labor-intensive source of employment. Another event in the area's settlement by the Irish occurred with the donation in 1849 of 100 acres of land to the Roman Catholic Diocese of Richmond, then headed by Bishop Richard Vincent Whelan (who became Bishop of the Diocese of Wheeling after the formation of that Diocese in 1850) who desired to reach and serve the growing Catholic population of Lewis County. The 100 acres were on Loveberry Ridge; they were donated by the Camden, Bailey and Camden Real Estate Company for the purpose of building a church, rectory, and cemetery. The donation of land by the company was aimed at encouraging settlement of the area and sale of additional lands.

The territory in and about Loveberry experienced rapid growth during the decades of the 1850's and 1860's. The population engaged in farming; and, during the latter part of the century, some residents secured temporary employment in the oil and gas industry, then booming in central West Virginia.

The church-owned tract on Loveberry Ridge was developed soon after 1850. The first church was of log construction, and a second, frame building, dedicated about 1864, served the community until 1908. It was reported that this building "swayed in the breezes that blew over Loveberry Ridge. In 1906, while administering the Sacrament of Confirmation, Bishop Donahue feared for his life, not being used to this phenomenon." In 1884, a significant date in the history of St. Bernard's, the three local missions of St. Bernard's, St. Bridget's, and St. Michael's were united in a new parish; its first and only resident pastor was Father Thomas Aquinas Quirk, who served in this post

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

Church Bulletins. St. Patrick's Parish, Weston, W. Va., Dec., 1983.

Kraus, Robert Mark. "The Life of the Right Reverend Monsignor Thomas Aquinas Quirk of the Wheeling Diocese. (M.A. Thesis) St. Mary's Seminary, Baltimore, Md. 1938.

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property 2½ acres

Quadrangle name Peterson, W. Va.

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UTM References

A	<u>17</u>	<u>535270</u>	<u>9315870</u>	B			
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
C				D			
E				F			
G				H			

### Verbal boundary description and justification

The nominated property includes a 2½ acre parcel upon which the church, cemetery and fence stand. The property is bounded on the north by the south edge of County Rt. 17/2; on the west by the east edge of County Rt. 20/6; on the south

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code
N/A			

state	code	county	code
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## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Rodney S. Collins, Architectural Historian

organization West Virginia Department of Culture and History date February 4, 1985

street & number The Cultural Center telephone 304-348-0240

city or town Charleston state West Virginia

## 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national  state  local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature 

title State Historic Preservation Officer

date May 2, 1985

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I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

William B. Cushing

date 7/12/85

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

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from 1884 until his death in 1937. One of Father Quirk's important contributions was the erection of St. Bernard's in 1909-10.

Thomas Aquinas Quirk is a significant figure in the history of Lewis County and central West Virginia. His contributions to the religious and social life of this section of West Virginia have become legendary. Father Quirk is often remembered for making sick calls to parishioners on horseback; his journeys took him into Upshur, Randolph, Webster, Braxton, and Gilmer Counties. (Father Quirk's horse, for a quarter of a century, was "Prince.")

According to the latest research, "Father Quirk was born in the family home in the townland of Hunting Hill near the Village of Castletownroche, County Cork, Ireland. He was born on March 7, 1845, during the Famine. The Church records at Killavullen, County Cork, state that he was baptized on November 29, 1845. His parents were Michael Quirk and Catherine Rice. His mother was related to Ignatius Rice, the founder of the Irish Christian Brothers. At an early age he went to the Primary and Classical schools established by the Cistercian Monks at the monastery of Mount Mellary. At the age of 18 he emigrated to the United States during the month of April, 1863. At that time it is believed he joined the 69th New York Regiment and fought in the Civil War." 1

"After the War he went to San Sulpice Seminary in Paris to study for the Priesthood; he also attended lectures at the Sorbonne. At the request of Bishop Richard V. Whelan he came to the Diocese of Wheeling in 1869. After further study under the direction of the bishop he was ordained to the Priesthood on August 31, 1870. His first appointment was to Saint James Cathedral where he spent about ten months. Next he was appointed to Parkersburg and after a stay of about one year he was sent to Huntington. For a few years he lived with the Carroll family in Guyandotte. A short time later he purchased land on Sixth Avenue, in Huntington, where he established the Parish of Saint Joseph and there built the first church. In 1884 he was transferred to Lewis County and the newly established parish encompassing the three communities of Saint Bernard, Saint Bridget and Saint Michael. Father Quirk served the new Lewis County parish with great distinction for the remaining 53 years of his life." 2

Through a request by Bishop J. J. Swint, Pope Pius XI made Father Quirk a Domestic Prelate. His investiture as a Monsignor by Bishop Swint occurred on May 22, 1935. Father Quirk continued to reside on Loveberry Ridge; on September 12, 1937, he died; exactly 53 years to the day after his arrival. The funeral for Father Quirk was held September 15, 1937, at St. Bernard's and presided over by Bishop Swint and nine Diocesan priests. Over 1,000 mourners attended the service.

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St. Bernard's Church and Cemetery are significant and well-preserved reminders of the work and dedication of many faithful residents of southwestern Lewis County and, in particular, to the labors of Father Quirk.

<sup>1</sup> "Memorial Celebration in Honor of Monsignor Thomas Aquinas Quirk, Saint Bernard Church, Loveberry." St. Patrick's Parish special bulletin, Weston, West Virginia, October 7, 1984, p3.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

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"Lewis County Priest, Honored by Pope, Active at 90 Years." Clarksburg  
Sunday Exponent-Telegram, April 7, 1935.

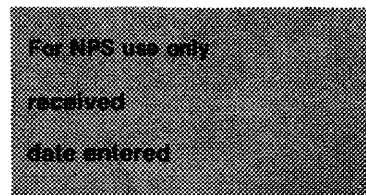
McCudden, Helena. "St. Bernard's Catholic Church, Loveberry Hill" and  
"A Historical Review of Father Thomas Aquinas Quirk." (handwritten  
manuscripts) Loveberry, Lewis County, W.V. n.p., n.d.

"Memorial Celebration in Honor of Monsignor Thomas Aquinas Quirk, Saint  
Bernard Church, Loveberry." St. Patrick's Parish, Weston, W. Va., Oct. 7, 1984.



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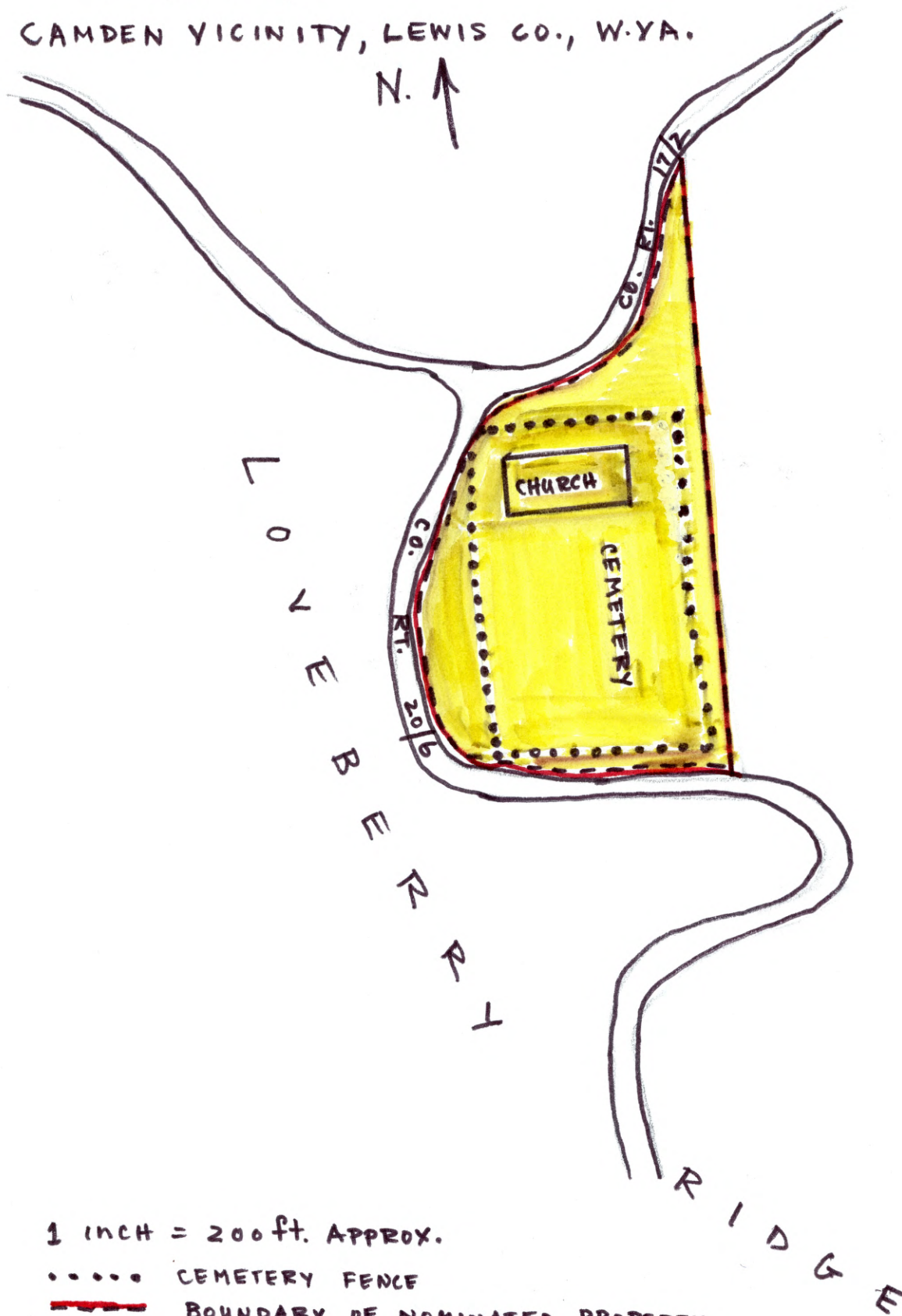
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by north edge of County Rt. 20/6 (which runs in an easterly direction as the result of a curve in the road); and on the east by a straight line approximately 800 feet long and paralleling the eastern edge of the cemetery and church (cast-iron fence and edge of cemetery) 10 ft. to the east of the cemetery and fence and connecting County Rts. 20/6 and 17/2.

# ST. BERNARD'S CHURCH AND CEMETERY

CAMDEN VICINITY, LEWIS CO., W.YA.



1 INCH = 200 FT. APPROX.

- ..... CEMETERY FENCE
- BOUNDARY OF NOMINATED PROPERTY
- AREA WITHIN BOUNDARY