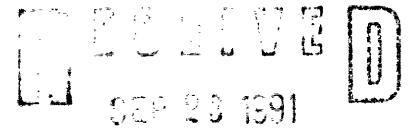


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NPS Form 10-900-b
(Jan 1987)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form



NATIONAL
REGISTER

This form is for use in documenting multiple property groups relating to one or several historic contexts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "X" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900-a). Type all entries.

A. Name of Multiple Property Listing

European Ethnic Communities, Dayton, Ohio

B. Associated Historic Contexts

Eastern European Ethnic Community, Dayton, Ohio: 1885-1966
German Ethnic Community, Dayton, Ohio: 1830-1925
Irish Ethnic Community, Dayton, Ohio: 1830-1920

C. Geographical Data

Corporate limits of the City of Dayton, Montgomery County, Ohio

☐ See continuation sheet

D. Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this documentation form meets the National Register documentation standards and sets forth requirements for the listing of related properties consistent with the National Register criteria. This submission meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR part 60 and the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Planning and Evaluation.

Barbara Pave

Signature of certifying official

9-11-91

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

I, hereby, certify that this multiple property documentation form has been approved by the National Register as a basis for evaluating related properties for listing in the National Register.

Patrick Anders

Signature of the Keeper of the National Register

11/5/91

Date

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APPENDIX A

The following are additional Property Types proposed as part of the Eastern European Ethnic Community, Dayton, Ohio context statement. The nominations being presented do not reflect all the above building types, but will be presented in subsequent nominations.

Residential architecture: including 1-story gable-front houses; 2-story gable-front houses, 1 or 1 1/2-story L or T-plan cottages; 2 or 2 1/2-story hip roofed house; 2 or 2 1/2-story house with gable and hip roof.

Industrial Building

Public Building: including schools and governmental buildings

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EASTERN EUROPEAN ETHNIC COMMUNITY, DAYTON, OHIO: 1885-1966

Outline

1. Introduction
2. Immigration in the Industrial Age
3. Ethnic Community: The Colonies
4. Ethnic Community: Old North Dayton
5. Ethnic Community: The Immigrants
6. Adjusting to the American Urban Environment: The Urban Village and the Ethnic Parish
7. Blending In: After 1914
8. Ethnic Community: 1950-1991

1. INTRODUCTION

The Eastern European immigration into Dayton in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries is one of the city's most important cultural phenomena. This immigration includes many different Eastern European ethnic groups, but those which had the heaviest impact upon Dayton's cultural landscape were the Hungarians, Lithuanians, and Polish, most of whom were Roman Catholic. Although the construction of the interstate system, urban renewal, and the deterioration of the inner city in recent years has eroded this cultural community, its existence is still one of Dayton's most distinctive urban features. This context statement will deal with the following points of significance:

1. The massive immigration of Eastern Europeans into the city between 1885-1915 transformed the ethnic character of Dayton's population. Until the movement of these groups onto Dayton's urban scene, the Germans, Irish, and English blended to form a relatively homogeneous urban population. The coming of the Eastern Europeans introduced new peoples with ideas and customs quite alien to the existing population and completed the "formation of Dayton's white religio-cultural mosaic" (Chudacoff 1975: 95).
2. The arrival of the Eastern Europeans, who came to fill the need of Dayton's rapidly expanding industries for unskilled labor, represents the coming of age of Dayton as a mature industrial city.
3. The built environment left by these immigrant groups provides a visible record of how they both impacted and were affected by the American urban scene and reflects patterns of urbanization and industrialization which were occurring in the cities of the northeast and midwest in this period.
4. The ethnic parish documents the important role of institutional life in both the assimilation of these groups into American society and the preservation of their Old World cultural values and traditions. The "ethnic" or "national-

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ity" parish is one defined on the basis of the common ethnic background of its congregation rather than on the basis of specific territorial boundaries.

5. Because of the central importance of the parish in the lives of the Eastern European immigrants, the majority of whom were Catholic, parish history is a valuable tool for studying working class life in urban America. The urban ethnic parish was composed of working class people who resided in the old city core or in the nearby industrial suburbs. It was the laity, members of the working class, who were most often responsible for the founding of the parish and who involved themselves with the details of its operation. Therefore, the records of its institutional life are an important source for documenting a group of people who left behind little written evidence of the quality and texture of their daily lives (Dolan 1987: 9) (Barton 1977: 12-13).

6. The continued strength of the ethnic parish documents the cultural pluralism which is a definitive feature of American society. Its presence negates the old assimilationist model which states that the assimilation of European immigrants was completed by the second generation. Quite to the contrary, these immigrants often resisted Americanizing influences and retained many of the institutions, values and customs of the Old World. In fact, "the immigrants themselves contributed to the transformation of the New World by the voluntary forming of communities and the construction of edifices through which ideas and practices that would otherwise never have had a hearing filtered into the mainstream culture" (Dolan 1987: 9). "Their responses to American conditions continually fed the evolution of American culture" and created a diversity which is a leading characteristic of American society today (Miller 1977: xiii).

2. IMMIGRATION IN THE INDUSTRIAL AGE

The period from 1880-1915 represents the heaviest period of immigration in the history of the United States and reflects its coming of age as the world's leading industrial nation. This immigration was "part of the general intra- and intercontinental migrations that characterized Europe and much of the Western world during that phase of the industrial revolution and the rising free economic system or capitalism" (Vardy 1985: 19). For the United States, the decade of the 1880s signalled the beginning of the golden age of iron and steel and was a period of unprecedented industrial expansion. This expansion was paralleled by the urbanization of the United States as the country's rural population joined the European immigrants who poured into America's cities in search of economic opportunity. The flood of European immigration reached a new high in 1903 when "the United States was fully established as the new industrial giant. In 1907, it reached the all-time peak of 1,285,000" (Lengyel 1948: 123).

Mass immigration to the United States has traditionally been divided into two periods. The first began in the 1840s and consisted primarily of Germans, English, Scotch, and Irish. The second began in the 1880s, peaked in the years between 1900-1910, declining into the 1920s. While those groups which made up the first wave were well-represented in the second wave, the dominant groups were Eastern and Southern Europeans. Between 1890-1930 Poles, Italians, Lithuanians, Slovaks, Magyars, Czechoslovakians, Slovenes and other Eastern and Southern Europeans crowded into the industrial cities of the northeast and midwest, completing the formation of the white cultural landscape (Chudacoff 1975: 92-93) (Olson 1987: 65).

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The immigrants which made up these two migratory waves brought traits which transformed American urban culture. Perhaps the most significant was the transformation of the nation from a predominantly Protestant country to a foreign Catholic/native Protestant society. By 1870 Catholicism had become the largest religious denomination representing about forty per cent of all churchgoers (Warner 1972: 161) (Chudacoff 1975: 93). Catholicism, with its alien set of beliefs and customs, introduced a highly visible and influential cultural presence which was viewed with suspicion and even open hostility by the native-born population. The ethnic parishes, with their voluntary societies and parochial schools which worked to preserve the language, traditions, and values of these ethnic groups, were often a focal point for tensions between native-born Americans and immigrant newcomers.

Both of these waves of immigration were composed mostly of Europeans of peasant stock, but they differed widely in numbers. "Between 1840-1880 the average influx per decade was about 2.4 million, and 2.8 million emigrated to the United States in the 1870s." From here the increase was dramatic. "In the 1880s over 5.2 million immigrants arrived; 8.8 million came between 1900-1910" (Chudacoff 1975: 94). As a result of this continual influx of immigrants, by the end of World War I foreign-born workers made up about forty-five per cent of the white labor force, the highest number in the history of the United States (Hutchinson 1956: 273).

Both of these waves of immigration occurred in Dayton, defining the character of the urban population. Although significant numbers of Irish and English made Dayton their home in the 1840-1880 period, the Germans rapidly became the dominant element of the population. Germans from the old country began to arrive to work on the canal in 1827 and increased in number in the 1830s and 1840s (Drury 1909: 500). These elements quickly became part of a relatively homogeneous group, divisions in economic status perhaps being recorded more readily through differences in church membership than by ethnicity. Interestingly, few of the city's industrialists were members of non-Protestant churches. "Although about thirty per cent of the population of the city around 1900 ostensibly belonged to the Roman Catholic church, only four of the 182 manufacturers were Roman Catholic" (Becker 1971: 328).

Dayton, like so many cities in the northeast and midwest United States in this period, was also experiencing a rapid expansion of its manufacturing capabilities. Not only were the number of businesses and manufactories increasing, but the size of corporations and the number of laborers needed were also expanding. According to Dr. Carl Becker (1971: 286-287):

"Notwithstanding...a downturn in economic activity in 1884, the city was in the midst of an exhilarative business surge. New manufacturing, wholesale, and retail firms were being established in the 1880s; industrial employment was on the rise; and construction of all types of buildings was increasing. Even out-of-town newspapers were commenting on the community's economic vitality."

Like many cities which were experiencing a period of unprecedented industrial expansion, Dayton was unable to provide adequate numbers of unskilled workers and was forced to look outside the area to meet their labor needs.

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In addition, labor difficulties in the late nineteenth century encouraged manufacturers to seek new sources of labor which would be unlikely to fall under the influence of union organizers (Zimmerman 1979: 17-18). They would find this source among the diverse groups of Eastern Europeans who were flooding American ports of entry at the turn of the century.

3. ETHNIC COMMUNITY: THE COLONIES

The first documented effort to bring large numbers of Eastern European laborers into Dayton was in 1898 when the Malleable Iron Company of Dayton placed an advertisement in a Toledo paper for a foreign labor contractor. Their ad was answered by Jacob Moskowitz, an immigrant Hungarian Jew, whose command of seven languages made him ideal for the position. After relocating his family to Dayton, he began recruiting workers from East Coast cities such as Bridgeport and Philadelphia. To bring them here, the company advanced train fare to these recruits, later deducting it in increments from their pay (Zimmerman 1979: 17-18).

“Over a period of just a few years Moskowitz brought over 700 workers to Dayton and settled them on the west side. He obtained most of the workers from factories in the eastern and central states bringing in skilled mechanics as well as unskilled workers. Homes were built for the people and Moskowitz himself financed the construction of a clubhouse, meat-shop, and general store, all of which he owned and operated until circa 1902. This settlement soon became known as the West Side Colony” (Cichanowicz 1963: 4).

Moskowitz went beyond the mere provision of a labor force for Dayton Malleable. He was also concerned with the difficulties faced by these immigrants in a strange midwestern city. According to a 1904 account by Dayton boosters, he had “done more than look after the physical wants of his countrymen” (Storms 1904: 101).

“He has helped them to organize societies, churches and beneficial societies. There are four societies now organized to which Hungarians belong. They have regular charters, and are conducted on the principles that govern similar societies to which native American societies belong. One of the beneficial lodges is a Catholic organization.”

The colony, located on Dayton's West Side, was bounded by Broadway on the east, West Third Street on the south, Negley Place and Wolf Creek on the north, and extended to Summit Street (now Dunbar Street) on the west. A study of the city directories reveals that North Dunbar Street, now listed on the National Register as the Paul Lawrence Dunbar Historic District, was home to many of these Eastern Europeans. According to a Y.W.C.A. report written about 1917, this small area contained about 6,000 immigrants, including large numbers of Hungarians and Rumanians, and smaller numbers of Poles, Greeks, Macedonians, Serbs, Croatians, Bulgarians, Turks, and Russians (Doren ca.1917: 3).

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This small geographical area once contained most of the elements of a self-sufficient urban village. Commercial activity was centered on Dakota and Edison streets where immigrant merchants operated saloons, bakeries, dry good stores, markets and other business establishments. The two Hungarian churches, Holy Name Roman Catholic Church and the First Magyar Reformed Church, were located one block north of Dakota Street on the edge of the colony. The Rumanian Greek Catholic church was located on the southwestern edge on Summit (now Dunbar) Street. On the western edge was Dayton Malleable Iron Works, the company which brought the West Side Colony into existence.

Homes were small frame houses, being one or one-and-a-half story L- and T-plan cottages. Also present were one or two-story gable-front houses, including a shotgun type house. Many of these had a rear appendage which extended out from the back of the house. This appendage generally had a door on the front of the extension. Here and there throughout the colony appeared a house/store combination with the house located to the rear of the lot and a small frame store built onto the front.

The establishment of the Kossuth Colony, located in the area now known as Old North Dayton, was Moskowitz' best known endeavor. This important Dayton landmark was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1979. This time his efforts were on behalf of the Barney and Smith Car Works, which at the turn of the century was still one of the foremost manufacturers of railroad cars in the country. New technology, however, threatened their preeminence in the industry and forced them to shift from the manufacture of wooden cars to steel ones. In 1905, a steel plant was constructed for the manufacture of these cars, and Moskowitz was hired to secure the necessary labor. According to a 1911 history of the Barney and Smith Company (Estabrook: 69):

"When the Steel Plant was put in operation it became necessary to employ a large number of foreign labor and to insure a steady source of supply of this character of labor it became evident that special provisions would have to be made for taking care of their social needs. Accordingly on August 5, 1905, authority was given for the organization of a company for the establishment of a Hungarian Colony. The Dayton Realty Company was therefore organized January 1906 for this purpose, and twelve acres of land were purchased on Leo Street in North Dayton."

Using his own funds, Moskowitz built about forty houses just outside of the Dayton city limits "on a tract of land which extended from Baltimore Street to Troy Street and north from Leo Street for the distance of two city blocks. The structures were identical one and two-story (gable-front) double houses with five rooms per family on each side. Attics were dormitories for unmarried men who boarded with the families" (Beauregard NR: 1978). The majority of its residents were Hungarians (5-600), but there were also about 100 Rumanians and a few members of other nationalities living in the colony (Doren ca.1917: 2).

As in the West Side Colony, Moskowitz built a large building called the Clubhouse which contained stores, offices, banking facilities and a beerhall (Beauregard NR: 1978). He took the issue of control much more seriously

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with the Kossuth Colony than with the West Side Colony, however, for Kossuth was surrounded by a twelve foot high wooden fence that was guarded by a watchman. It is thought that Moskowitz felt the walls were necessary to prevent other foreign labor agents from luring immigrant laborers away from the colony. Visitors were welcome, but occupants were forbidden to bring items into the colony which could be bought at the colony store. This rule was strictly enforced - those caught were immediately discharged from their jobs at Barney and Smith and forced to leave the colony.

Opinions varied widely regarding Moskowitz' intentions towards his fellow countrymen. Some saw him as a highly respected leader within the Hungarian community, while others saw him as an unscrupulous businessman who took undue advantage of these Eastern European immigrants. Moskowitz was sharply criticized by Daytonians for what seemed to them to be tyrannical control of the colony's residents, but a state investigation cleared him of charges of wrongdoing. This colony remained enclosed only until 1913. The 1913 flood brought about the gradual demise of the great car works which had given birth to this unique immigrant colony, and by 1921 the Kossuth Colony properties had passed into private hands.

4. ETHNIC COMMUNITY: OLD NORTH DAYTON

Most of the Eastern Europeans who came into Dayton at the turn of the century lived outside of the Moskowitz colonies in North and East Dayton. The largest immigrant neighborhood was the area known as North Dayton bounded by the C&O Railroad on the north, the B&O Railroad on the west, the Mad River to the east and south to Keowee and First streets (Nottingham 1988: ii). Known by various names such as "Texas" and "Palma," it did not become known as North Dayton until about 1890 (Drury 1909: 240). Significant settlement did not occur until the 1880s when Germans moved into the area. Although the neighborhood included Germans, Irish, and native-born Americans, its character was increasingly determined by the Eastern Europeans who crowded into North Dayton seeking employment in nearby foundries and factories in the early twentieth century. The most visible of these Eastern European groups were the Hungarians, Poles, and Lithuanians, but there were also Croatians, Russians, Bulgarians, and Serbs.

The streetscape of the industrial suburb of Old North Dayton was typical of the streetscapes of turn of the century urban America. Houses were located on narrow lots and included one and two-story Folk Victorian houses and cottages, two-story gable-front houses, and some American Foursquares. Occasionally, a large multi-family apartment building broke the even rhythm of the streetscape. Most buildings were of frame construction, although some of the neighborhood's most distinctive houses were brick.

Churches, corner stores, and schools completed the architectural fabric of the residential district. The German churches were for the most part clustered near the center of Old North Dayton, while the Eastern European ethnic parishes were more widely dispersed at the edges of the original limits of the neighborhood. The exception was St. Adalbert's Polish Catholic Church which, due to Holy Rosary's objection to the close proximity of this first ethnic parish to their church, was located further to the northeast on Valley Street.

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Public and parochial schools were also an important feature of the North Dayton streetscape. Webster, constructed in 1892, was located in the southwest. Allen School (1899) had an east central location. Kiser, constructed in 1925-1926, was located on the northwestern edge. Located mostly on Valley Street and on the western edge of Old North Dayton were small industrial buildings and complexes which, in addition to Dayton's main industrial district located on the other side of the Mad River at the southern boundary of Old North Dayton, offered employment to neighborhood residents.

The commercial needs of the North Dayton neighborhood were met by linear business districts which sprang up along the streetcar lines connecting this suburban/industrial area to the city's central core. The first district was located at the southern end of the neighborhood on Valley Street between Troy and Keowee streets, and on the southern edge of Troy where it intersects with Valley. The Valley Street District was the most cohesive commercial area and consisted of two and three-story brick and frame buildings constructed mostly between 1890-1920.

In the second business district, located on Troy Street, the commercial buildings were interspersed with dwellings and were, for the most part, constructed later than those located in the district on Valley Street. Many of the buildings on upper Troy Street dated from the 1915-1930 period. Buildings in the earlier Valley Street District were built mostly in the Italianate and Craftsman styles, although there were several built in the functional style of the early twentieth century. In contrast, on Troy Street, commercial design was dominated by the plain, functional designs of the 1910-1935 period and included large multi-story corner commercial blocks. These districts were composed of a variety of establishments including hardware stores, men's furnishings stores, barber shops, markets and grocery stores.

(See Appendix A for list of proposed Property Types.)

5. ETHNIC COMMUNITY: THE IMMIGRANTS

The Eastern Europeans who came into the United States in increasingly large numbers after 1880 were searching for ways to cope with the changing economic conditions in their agricultural homeland. "Eastern Europe after mid-century resembled western Europe a century earlier - an underdeveloped area with little industrialization, heavily dependent on agriculture both for subsistence and for market income" (Thernstrom et al 1980: 790-791).

As conditions deteriorated, the peasants began a life of migratory labor in order to accumulate money to meet their debt obligations or purchase land. Increasingly, they accepted seasonal work on the large commercial estates or sought industrial work in the cities and towns of eastern and western Europe. The construction of railway systems in Eastern Europe in this period also offered a good source of employment and facilitated their movement around Europe in search of work. Unfortunately, the railroad caused further damage to the peasant livelihood by making manufactured goods easily available and thereby diminishing the economic viability of the peasant cottage industries. As the peasants gradually became accustomed to a life of migratory labor, they were willing to go

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further and further away from home to earn the money needed to relieve their strained financial situation. Eventually their search for employment brought them to the United States (Thernstrom et al 1980: 464, 667).

Initially, most of the Eastern Europeans who emigrated to the United States were not looking for a new home. Quite to the contrary, their time spent in the towns and cities of industrial America was intended to be relatively brief.

“...instead of traveling around...in search of temporary jobs, they would go to America, where wages were higher; they would do hard, dirty, dangerous, but well-paid work, live as cheaply as possible for a few years, then come back...to pay the bills, improve their farms, and satisfy their ambitions” (Thernstrom et al 1980: 464).

At first, most of the immigrants were young men who were either single or who had left their families back in the Old World. They lived simply, worked hard, and looked forward to the day when they would return home. In the end, however, most changed their plans for repatriation and directed their efforts towards establishing a comfortable and secure life for their family in the American urban environment (Thernstrom et al 1980: 464).

The largest of the Eastern European immigrant groups were the Poles who numbered three million by 1920 (Liptak 1989: 131). Most of the Poles who arrived after 1890 were Russian and Austrian Poles and were devout Roman Catholics. Their particularly intense involvement with their Polish homeland and their large numbers meant that they would be slower than most Eastern European groups to adopt American ways and participate in American politics. By 1913, Chicago, known as the American Warsaw, contained more than 250,000 Poles. Buffalo and Milwaukee were second in number with Polish populations numbering 70,000 each (Liptak 1989: 116). Polish neighborhoods soon proliferated in countless cities and towns of the industrial northeast and midwest.

The Poles who emigrated to America prior to World War I left behind a country which had not existed as a political state since 1795. Partitioned by three surrounding powers - Russia, Prussia, and Austria - Poland existed as “a national culture society without its own political state” (Lopata 1976: 5). The Poles living in these three territories viewed themselves as living in three provinces of the Polish nation and considered Polonia in America to be the fourth province. Russian and Prussian politics of de-Polonization only encouraged the growth of Polish nationalism in this period (Lopata 1976: 5).

Because Poland needed the help and support of the members of the Polish-American community, Polish leaders on both sides of the Atlantic worked to encourage a sense of belonging and participation in Poland's affairs. To successfully enlist their help, however, it was necessary to educate a very parochial peasant population on Polish history and culture and imbue them with strong feelings of national pride. In addition, peasants were told that their social status would be greater in an independent Poland. Ultimately, Polish-Americans contributed millions of dollars to the Polish war effort and influenced President Wilson's decision to allow Poland to regain its independence after World War I (Lopata 1976: 20-23).

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The Lithuanian migration to the United States began in the late 1860s and continued until the outbreak of World War I. A much smaller group than the Poles, the Lithuanian-American community numbered only about 300,000 by the 1920s (Liptak 1989: 132). Like many of the Eastern Europeans, they came from a country in which foreign occupation had had considerable impact on national culture and affected the settlement patterns of Lithuanians in the New World. In the late 1300s, Grand Duke Jogaila had accepted Roman Catholicism, married the heiress to the Polish throne and became King of Poland as Ladislaus II. In 1569, the Treaty of Lublin united the Kingdom of Poland with the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. The Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, known as the Rzeczpospolita, continued until 1795 when most of the Lithuanian provinces became a part of the Russian Empire (Thernstrom et al 1980: 665, 789).

For the Lithuanians, who were divided by differing folk cultures and dialects, the concept of national culture was largely unknown. Insomuch as they were able to identify themselves with any one group, they identified themselves as Poles. Because of the policies of the Rzeczpospolita:

“Many villagers identified culturally with the local Polophile elites that had traditionally dominated the social life of the Lithuanian countryside. Because the Polish language was popularly associated with superior social status, wealthier peasants and their children often adopted it as their own. The Polonization of Lithuanian villagers was further encouraged by the Catholic hierarchy. Because church leaders considered Lithuanian to be a pagan, barbarous tongue, Polish was often the sole language of worship and religious instruction in many rural parishes” (Thernstrom et al 1980: 666).

By the 1880s, however, a Lithuanian nationalistic outlook was beginning to develop despite Polish cultural dominance and Lithuanian parochialism (Thernstrom 1980: 666).

As a result of several centuries of Polish domination, the early Lithuanian immigrants did not organize their own institutions, but instead joined Polish-Catholic ones. But by the late 1880s, as Lithuanian culture emerged, they increasingly drew away from the Poles and formed their own institutions and developed a distinctive Lithuanian-American community. Like many Eastern Europeans, because of close family ties and the growing patriotism nurtured by lay and clerical leaders at the turn of the century, the Lithuanian-American community continued to render valuable support to the movement for Lithuanian independence in the pre-World War I era. After the war, they provided considerable assistance to efforts to reconstruct their ravaged homeland (Thernstrom et al 1980: 673).

Although it is difficult to state precisely, it is estimated that 1,600,000 to 1,700,000 Hungarians arrived in the United States before 1920 (Lengyel 1948: 123). Their numbers included a wide variety of ethnic groups including Magyars, Slovenes, Rusins, Rumanians, and other Slavic groups. Religiously diverse as well, the population was sixty percent Catholic, perhaps one-sixth of which were Greek rite. Twenty-five percent were Protestant, most of whom were Calvinists who belonged to the Reformed Church of Hungary, although some were Lutherans,

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Unitarians, and Baptists. About five percent were Jews. The remaining number belonged to one of the various Greek Orthodox Churches. (Thernstrom et al 1980: 462).

The dominant ethnic group in Hungary were the Magyars, and it was they who occupied the positions of power in that country. Following the Compromise of 1867, in which the Hapsburg monarchy agreed to give Hungary dominance over internal affairs, the Magyars began an intense program of Magyarization. After 1868, Magyar was recognized as the official language and was required to occupy high level governmental positions and to enter the upper level of the educational system. Because of these policies, language rather than nationality or religion became the leading source of ethnic identity in Hungary (Thernstrom et al 1980: 463).

The first immigrants to leave Hungary after 1880 were non-Magyar Slavic peoples. For twenty years they made up the majority of the Hungarians departing for the United States. Not until 1899 did large numbers of Magyars join the massive exodus from Hungary taking place at the turn of the century. By 1903, however, Magyars had become the largest ethnic group in the migratory process. New York and Cleveland became major Hungarian centers. Indeed, for a number of years Cleveland was known as the second largest Hungarian city - only Budapest was larger (Torok 1978: 8). Hungarians also crowded into newer industrial cities such as Detroit and Akron. Generally, however, immigrants only came to these cities after spending time in other American urban centers.

Alarmed by the massive emigration of Magyars, the Hungarian government launched the "American Action" program aimed at promulgating close political ties between the Hungarian-Americans and their European homeland. Through a variety of means, including providing financial incentives to Hungarian-American parishes, the government sought to ensure that their wandering countrymen would ultimately return home, but their efforts were doomed to fail. After the war, Hungarian-Americans sponsored rallies to protest the treaty which had dismembered their homeland and they continued to observe Hungarian national holidays, but most never returned permanently to Hungary.

Dayton, like most industrial cities in the midwest, became the destination of numerous Eastern European immigrants in their search for employment at the turn of the century. It is not known how many came directly from Europe and how many migrated from other urban centers in the United States, but brief statements in historical and contemporary accounts indicate that many came here after spending time in older urban centers on the Atlantic seaboard.

The best contemporary source of information on the social condition of these immigrant groups is "Foreigners in Dayton, An Investigation" written by Alice M. Doren about 1917 for the Immigration and Foreign Community Department of the Young Women's Christian Association. Like many urban social organizations in this period, one of the Y's leading concerns was the Americanization of the increasingly large number of Eastern and Southern European immigrants moving into the nation's industrial cities. In Dayton's case, the Y.M.C.A. and the Y.W.C.A. took a particularly active role in assisting newcomers in the Moskowitz colonies and in North and East Dayton. They offered English classes at several locations including Webster School in North Dayton and at the club hall in

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the Kossuth Colony as well as providing other social services. In 1909, Dayton Malleable provided a building on Euclid Avenue adjacent to the West Side Colony for the founding of the first Hungarian Y.M.C.A. in the United States:

"By 1910 the Y.M.C.A. building was 'packed to the doors' for the various lessons and entertainments. The Dayton Y.M.C.A., encouraged by this success, now realized the... 'possibilities in the work for foreigners in our city...' and gave... 'time and thought to these strangers within our gates'" (Zimmerman 1979: 80).

Because they were so actively involved with this ethnic community, they were able to record much valuable information about these Eastern European groups.

It was the Hungarians who were the largest and most visible group in Dayton's Eastern European ethnic community. Hungarians first appeared in notable numbers about 1899 when Jacob Moskowitz recruited them for the Dayton Malleable Iron Company. In 1910, the United States Census numbered them at 1,761. By 1920 their numbers had increased only slightly to 1,921 (Zimmerman 1979: 84). In sharp contrast, Alice Doren in her ca.1917 Y.W.C.A. report states that there were 5-6,000 Hungarians living in Dayton. It is unlikely that so many Hungarians left the city between 1917-1920, so why are do these figures differ so widely?

Actually, there are several reasons why the United States Census and the Y.W.C.A. numbers are so different. First, the Austro-Hungarian Empire contained many different nationalities and these groups often did not report themselves as Hungarians, but as Ukrainians, Rumanians, Slovenes, etc. Poland's national history posed similar problems to census takers. Secondly, the United States government repeatedly changed its recording methods making for inconsistent census results. Because the Y.W.C.A. worked so closely with these immigrant groups year after year, their numbers acquire a certain firsthand credibility that the census lacks.

According to Ms. Doren, six hundred of these 5-6,000 Hungarians resided in the Kossuth Colony, 2-2500 lived in North and East Dayton, and 2-3000 lived in the West Side Colony. Although many owned their own homes by the time this report was written, housing was crowded with two or three families frequently residing in one small cottage. "As many as twenty-five and thirty men and women were found in four rooms on Dakota Street, at the expense of all decency and sanitation" (Doren ca.1917: 13). Dakota Street was the main street of the West Side Colony, which Doren said was much more congested than other areas of Dayton's ethnic community (Doren ca.1917: 3).

While the first Poles arrived in Dayton in 1877, they were not a noticeable presence until the very last years of the nineteenth century. By 1902, Father Strzelczok, the Polish priest, reported that there were about forty Polish families and sixty single men (St. Adalbert's 1978: 11). Despite these numbers, the 1910 United States Census does not even record their presence in Dayton. By circa 1917, Alice Doren stated that there were:

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"...two hundred and thirty Polish families of sixteen hundred individuals. One hundred and twenty-eight families are in north Dayton, the majority in the neighborhood of the Polish Church on east Valley Street; eighty families are in east Dayton on Sachs, Crane, Findlay, east Monument Avenue, east First, and Springfield Streets; twenty-five families are on the west side on North Summit, west Dakota, west Monument, and Falkner Streets. Among them are one thousand men, 'all heavy workers.'"

Most families kept an average of three boarders and few owned their own homes. Living conditions were generally crowded and unsanitary (Doren ca.1917: 16-17).

The first Lithuanians (two in number) arrived in Dayton in 1886. By 1894, there were twenty-four Lithuanian families and about fifty single men totaling about 125 persons (Holy Cross 1964: 52-53). By ca. 1917, there were 140 families with 706 individuals (Doren ca.1917: 17). Many of these immigrants came from Lithuania or from American industrial cities. Most settled in North Dayton (Holy Cross 1964: 53-55). According to Doren (ca.1917: 3), "all but one or two families" lived in that section. Of the 140 families, fifty-eight owned their own homes and their living conditions were not as crowded as that of many of the Eastern European immigrant groups (Doren ca.1917: 17).

The Eastern European ethnic community also had a large population of Rumanians, numbering about 3,000 when Doren's report was written. All but about one hundred lived in the West Side Colony. They included immigrants from Rumania proper and Transylvania and Bukowina, provinces included in the Austro-Hungarian Empire. According to Doren, their housing conditions were the very worst of the immigrant groups. Many families kept from ten to twenty boarders and most were illiterate. In addition, there were "quite often houses of Rumanian men living alone, with sometimes a day and night shift to occupy the same beds" (ca.1917: 14).

Despite the large numbers of Rumanians present in the community, they are no longer a part of Dayton's cultural landscape. While the Hungarians, Poles, and Lithuanians are still very visible parts of the city's urban culture, the Rumanians have vanished. Part of this is perhaps attributable to the fact that the West Side Colony, where the great majority of them resided, was abandoned by white ethnic groups and much of it has been demolished. Still, the two Hungarian churches and the parochial school stand, reminders of this once bustling colony, while the Rumanian Greek Catholic church no longer exists.

Another possible answer is differences in the patterns of assimilation of these different ethnic groups. Josef Barton in his study, Peasants and Strangers: Italians, Rumanians, and Slovaks in an American City, 1890-1950 (1975: 172) states that:

"It is the Rumanians who represent the classic rise of an immigrant group. The secular orientation of their ethnic culture, the alacrity with which they adopted an urban small family life, and their consistent use of education as a means of upward mobility facilitated their rapid gain of middle-class status."

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Perhaps, then, their basic ability and desire to rapidly adopt middle class American culture and their lack of attachment to an ethnic parish meant that they did not retain their ethnic identity past the first generation.

6. ADJUSTING TO THE AMERICAN URBAN ENVIRONMENT: THE URBAN VILLAGE AND THE ETHNIC PARISH

The immigrants who came into Dayton between 1885-1915 found life in the new "land of promise" more difficult than they had imagined. Not only were they faced with an unfamiliar urban environment, they faced considerable prejudice from the native-born population who viewed their languages and customs with suspicion and hostility (Zimmerman 1979: 34). The American dislike of Eastern Europeans dated back many years before the turn of the century. They considered them "educationally deficient, socially backward, and bizarre in appearance" (Higham 1988: 65). Furthermore:

"More exclusively than most older immigrant groups, the new ones swarmed into the slums, the factories, and the mines. Either urbanites or industrial workers, and usually both, they played a role in American life that lent itself to nativist interpretation. In the crowded places where they made their homes, they lived as a class apart, the least assimilated and the most impoverished of the immigrants. Hence, they symbolized vividly the social and economic ills with which nativists identified the immigrants generally....Above all, each of the southern and eastern European nationalities seemed to Americans in some way a disturber of the peace, thereby focalizing the fear of foreign-bred discontent" (Higham 1988: 88).

Daytonians also viewed these new immigrants with like feelings and emotions. In 1904, the Dayton Daily News declared that (Zimmerman 1979: 34):

"The class of newcomers is becoming lower every year....people who do not compare in character with the sturdy people who in other years settled here and whose energy and enterprise have aided in the upbuilding of a great nation....now Italy, Austria-Hungary, and Russia supply the greater number of those that swell the population of the United States."

Many believed that these new immigrants were robbing native-born Americans of job opportunities. As a result, their presence in Dayton factories was resented and "some Hungarians employed at Dayton Malleable Iron Company had to resort to traveling to work via the railroad track to avoid being stoned on the streets" (Zimmerman 1979: 33).

Their lack of job status was also a source of stress in their new urban surroundings. Mostly unskilled laborers, they found themselves at the bottom of the job ladder, forced to accept the most menial and dangerous jobs rejected by the native-born work force. They found their niche primarily in the steel and iron foundries and other factories

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where the level of danger and their lack of knowledge of the English language combined to make them the victims of countless industrial accidents (Vardy 1985: 30). In the face of these difficulties, the immigrants turned inwards drawing on their own resources to solve the problems posed by their new environment and to sustain familiar customs, language, and traditions.

While the Eastern European immigrants were divided by their diverse national histories and differing folkways, they shared a common peasant heritage - a history of communalism which led to "the creation of the ethnic village in the American city and the development of immigrant institutional life" (Mohl 1985: 85). Although changes in the European economy had disrupted their patterns of communal living, these immigrants still brought with them the values of a feudal past in which one's societal role was determined by class and status (Olson 1987: 66). As a result, the "peasants viewed themselves as a working people obligated by fate to labor for a living all their lives. Once in America, that identity survived as they assumed their places in the blue-collar economy of the midwest, generally preferring work to education for several generations" (Olson 1987: 66).

This peasant identity also included beliefs about community, land, and property. In Europe, before nineteenth century economic change forced peasants into a life of migratory labor, generation after generation often passed their lives in one place. Not only did land determine status and often define one's position in the community, but the peasant felt a deep emotional attachment to his land and village. "That Old World love of community and place became a love of and loyalty to their American neighborhood once they set up their 'urban villages' in the United States" (Olson 1987: 66-67).

The disruption of traditional life patterns which tore apart the strong fabric of family and community not only brought Eastern Europeans to the United States, but also provided them with healthy methods of coping with the challenges of a new urban environment.

"Nineteenth century economic changes, by integrating peasant families into the larger Atlantic economy and undermining land tenure, destroyed the sense of security and threatened the family. The consolidation of small estates, loss of land, and decline of cottage industries destroyed the economic independence so central to the peasant family. When family members began moving to cities in search of work, the cycle of family and religious holidays was broken....Instead of the collective, predictable cycles of the past, family and village life became governed by impersonal forces in the Atlantic economy. Class and interest group relationships began to replace the old communal order. Insecure and economically vulnerable, peasants had to build a new set of institutions outside the nuclear family to guarantee survival" (Olson 1987: 68).

Out of their traumatic adjustments came new ways of networking which would ensure the survival of the family group in times of crisis. Families were extended through marriage, apprenticeships, and other arrangements. Voluntary associations for health, life, and burial insurance, trade organization, and other purposes also became common devices to provide for the needs of the extended group. Additionally, the force of Catholic revivalism in

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the nineteenth century led to the strengthened position of the parish as a source of stability in an increasingly unstable world. As the world they knew faded, these peasants turned to religious associations, confraternities, and sodalities to fill the void left by broken family and community ties. As they began their massive immigration to a new world, these religious and secular voluntary organizations provided them with the emotional support and the necessary leadership systems to adjust successfully to the new and confusing American urban environment (Olson 1987: 69). According to Olson (1987: 82):

“As they passed through Castle Garden and later Ellis Island, the East-European Catholics already possessed a strong sense of ethnicity based on shared perceptions of village, land, work, family, history, nationality, and religion. Like every other immigrant group, they tried to reconstruct Old World institutions as a means of coping with their new environment. In the great urban centers of the Northeast and Upper Midwest, a series of Polish, Lithuanian, Czech, Slovak, Magyar, Slovene, Croatian, Rusin, and Ukrainian communities appeared, not as separated and enclosed residential villages but as organizational communities revolving around the Catholic parish, religious associations, and parochial schools. These immigrants could not, of course, recreate American life in an Old World mold, but their ethnic communities, particularly the Church, played a critical role in their acculturation and assimilation.”

In the American urban village, immigrants continued Old World networking patterns to adjust to life in the sometimes bewildering city environment. Family life included a wide variety of interlocking relationships extending outside the immediate family to include godparents, distant relatives, and members of the endless number of immigrant voluntary associations. Within these urban settlements, “the voluntary associations became the characteristic social unit which provided a ‘matrix within which the group organized its policing devices, family life, marriage, churches, educational system, and associations for cultural and social ends’” (Barton 1977: 14-15). The general lack of public institutions to cope with social problems in this period of American history reinforced the immigrants’ tendency to accomodate old models of order to solve the difficulties encountered in their new urban neighborhoods.

Immigrants translated their Old World view of property as an important source of status into determined efforts to purchase homes in the American urban ethnic neighborhood. According to Olson (1987: 114-115):

“Even while sending large amounts of money back to Europe, contributing to the construction of the parish church, and struggling in low-paying jobs, they managed to save money and accumulate the equity necessary for a down payment on a house....The small lot, comfortable home, and secure neighborhood became the New World equivalent of the Old World farm and peasant village.”

Alice Doren in her circa 1917 report wrote that many of the Hungarians owned their own homes as did many of the Lithuanians (13 & 17). As the community moved past the early years of immigration, the number who decided to remain in Dayton and purchase their homes increased.

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While the complex web of extended relationships drew immigrants together into compact geographical areas, the ethnic neighborhood did not have the homogeneous population which might have been expected. Instead, the neighborhoods were residentially mixed, each ethnic group having their own churches and social institutions. Alice Doren (ca.1917: 2) stated that North Dayton, "the largest foreign community in the city," was "perhaps half American." It included not only large numbers of Hungarians, Poles, and Lithuanians, but many other ethnic groups as well. Some of the streets were "almost wholly foreign," while others were "foreign and American mixed." The West Side Colony exhibited a similar ethnic diversity (Doren ca.1917: 3).

If the population of these ethnic neighborhoods was not as monolithic as they first appeared, neither were they as stable. Vardy, in his study of Hungarian immigrants, stated that few Hungarian immigrants remained in one place. Instead, they moved frequently in search of better job opportunities and often returned repeatedly to Hungary. Some repatriated permanently. Indeed, as mentioned previously, many Eastern Europeans came with no intention of remaining in America, only planning to stay long enough to acquire sufficient money to establish themselves as independent peasant farmers back in their European homeland (Vardy 1985: 35-38). Therefore, the ethnic neighborhood "appeared stable only because people moving in were of the same nationality as those moving out" (Chudacoff 1975: 115). In a rather reverse view of how we usually look at the ethnic neighborhood, Chudacoff (1975: 116) points out that:

"The (ethnic neighborhood's) major importance was cultural. It centralized institutions rather than group residence. That is, the churches, clubs, and retail establishments of a single ethnic group frequently located in an area near a bulk of their members and clients....Thus the secondary commercial centers that sprouted around mass transit routes and intersections often became sites of ethnic business and social activities. The visibility of these institutions gave districts their ethnic identifications even though residential patterns were mixed and unstable."

Although the Eastern European groups had different histories and folkways, they turned to many of the same institutions to maintain their language and culture and to make a successful transition to American urban society (Olson 1987: 65-66). One of the most important of these was the church and the ethnic parish.

* * *

The "ethnic" or "national" parish is an American Catholic institution that was created to solve the many conflicts which arose between Catholic immigrant groups and the American Church as early as the eighteenth century. The problems of multi-ethnicity in the American environment forced American Catholicism to assume a flexibility unknown in European countries. In Europe, the hierarchy centralized the Church and geography determined the parish boundaries, but the cultural plurality of American society made the accommodation of the ethnic parish a necessity (Chudacoff 1975: 96). The earliest ethnic parishes were German, the first being established in 1785.

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The Eastern Europeans, many of whom brought with them a deep-seated mistrust of the Church hierarchy, arrived to find a Catholic hierarchy dominated by the Irish, who by 1870 had gained control of the Church bureaucracy (Miller 1977: xviii). At first, the Eastern Europeans tried to take part in the already established parishes, but they soon found that the cultural disparity between their Old World parishes and the mostly Irish and German parishes left them unsatisfied. As with the earlier Irish and German immigrants, the church was not just a place of worship, it was also the "very bone and sinew of ethnicity" (Miller 1977: xv):

"...the immigrants' religion transcended the reconstruction of the ritual and institutional forms of the Old World faith. Religion was intertwined and imbedded in the psyche, the folklife, the very identity of each immigrant. It gave meaning, a system of moral values, self-definition, and community to the immigrant" (Miller 1977: xv).

Within the walls of the ethnic church, immigrants could honor their favored saints, celebrate chosen special events, and worship in the language to which they were accustomed. For the immigrants, the Catholic parish was the strongest institution for the preservation of cultural values, traditions, and language.

Not surprisingly, this dual purpose as a center of religion and ethnic culture combined to produce strong feelings of patriotism and nationalism often not present until these immigrants took their place in the American urban environment. Coming from the communal life of the peasant village, many had known a strong sense of allegiance to only their village or region and had little knowledge of national history or culture. In America, however, the churches, both Catholic and Protestant, did much to heighten a sense of national belonging, blending religion and culture into a type of ethnoreligion (Vardy 1985: 51).

The Irish hierarchy found the "pagan" religious practices of the Eastern European Catholics threatening to Church unity and in many ways pushed for the rapid assimilation of these immigrant groups into the mainstream of American Catholic culture, but to no avail. In the end, the Catholic hierarchy, forced to choose between unity and schism, bowed to the inevitable proliferation of ethnic parishes (Galush 1977: 87). The continued existence of many of these ethnic parishes today documents the cultural plurality of American society and "remind(s) us of the vitality and force of religion as a factor in defining and preserving ethnic life and character in America" (Miller 1977: xxii).

Eastern European ethnic parishes in the United States began to proliferate in the late nineteenth century and continued to increase in number until 1935-1940. The Polish parishes were by far the most numerous. From seventeen parishes in 1870, their numbers expanded to 170 in 1890; 390 in 1900; 512 in 1910; and 760 in 1920. Peaking at approximately 800 in 1935, they declined thereafter to 760 in 1960. The Lithuanian parishes numbered about 30 by 1900, increasing to over 100 by 1920 (Thernstrom 1980: 794, 669). The Hungarians were generally slower in organizing churches. In 1900, there were only six Magyar parishes in existence, although by 1920 there were 51 and by 1940 there were 71. By 1960, their numbers had decreased to 62 and by 1982 they had fallen to 36. The figures given for the Magyar parishes, however, were taken from the Official Directory of the Roman Catholic

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Church (1860-1982 editions) which excluded territorial ethnic parishes. Therefore, the actual number of Hungarian Magyar parishes was undoubtedly somewhat greater than those cited here (Olson 1987: 121-122).

The initiative and expense of establishing ethnic parishes were usually assumed by the laity. Typically, members of an immigrant group would form a voluntary association (often a mutual benefit society) and begin to raise money to purchase land and construct a church. Eventually, they would petition the archdiocese for permission to establish a parish (Olson 1987: 104). The parish frequently operated a parochial school which provided instruction in their native language and culture and reinforced ethnic identity (Dolan 1987: 17) (Mohl 1985: 88).

The first Roman Catholic church to be established in North Dayton was Our Lady of the Rosary, organized in 1888 by the Germans who first settled this part of Dayton. Originally called Holy Rosary, it was also the territorial parish and was the church which faced the enormous difficulties of meeting the needs of the Eastern European immigrants with their many different languages and traditions. The present building, built in 1918, was designed by W. L. Jaekle, and garnered special notice by the editors of The Architectural Record, who devoted an article to it in 1919. Behind the church stands the rectory and the school. Our Lady of the Rosary operates the only parochial school remaining in Old North Dayton.

The oldest Eastern European ethnic parish in Dayton is St. Adalbert Polish Catholic Church, which was established as the ninth Catholic parish in Dayton on January 5, 1903. The Poles who came to Dayton in the late nineteenth century first traveled to Polish churches in Cincinnati, Toledo, Cleveland, and Detroit. As they grew in number, they invited Polish-speaking priests from Cincinnati and Toledo to give mass and hear confession. Under the guidance of Father Ladislav Lipski of Cincinnati, the Polish men organized a society under the patronage of Our Lady of Czestochowa on September 16, 1902. Father Lipski also arranged for them to worship at the school chapel of Emmanuel Roman Catholic Church located in downtown Dayton.

Following the normal pattern of the American Catholic ethnic parish, parish members worked to raise funds needed for the construction of the church and prepared to purchase a one and a half acre tract of land on the corner of Troy and Leo streets. Unfortunately, the territorial parish, Holy Rosary, felt threatened by the close proximity of this first ethnic parish and complained to the Archdiocese of Cincinnati, who denied them permission to build the church on that site. The parish finally settled on a .8 acre tract of land on Valley Pike which they purchased on January 26, 1904. The building, a combination chapel-school-residence, was designed by Frank Sutter. The church was dedicated April 30, 1905 (St. Adalbert's: 1978: 10-14). In 1965, the congregation decided to construct a new building behind the 1904-05 church. The new building was dedicated April 23, 1967. The historic building is now used as the church hall.

St. Adalbert's parochial school began operation in the fall of 1905 and lay teachers were employed until the coming of the Polish Franciscan Sisters of Our Lady of Perpetual Help from St. Louis, Missouri in 1915. Enrollment peaked at about 280 students in 1925, but after 1940 the number of students dropped drastically to about 100 or less (St. Adalbert's 1978: 14 & 27).

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For a time, the Lithuanians living in North and East Dayton worshipped at Holy Rosary or, later, St. Adalbert's while they began to work for the establishment of their own parish church where they could follow the traditions and customs of home. St. Peter's Fraternal Society was organized December 7, 1902 and began to work towards the establishment of a Lithuanian parish. They purchased an eight lot tract of land (1.1 acres) at the southwest corner of Leo and Rita streets, but permission to establish the parish was not granted until 1911. Through regular monthly payments by some members, fundraising activities such as socials and picnics, and contributions by Lithuanians in Springfield, Columbus, and Cincinnati, the money was finally raised for construction of the building. William L. Jaekle, the architect who designed Holy Rosary, was contracted to design the church and construction began in 1912. The church was blessed March 21, 1915 (Holy Cross 1964: 55-58).

The church took on its present appearance when it was remodeled in 1963-1964. As it stands today, it is the best possible documentary artifact of the strength and durability of the ethnic parish and its ability to preserve the culture and traditions of the old country while becoming a vital part of American urban society. The building was designed to honor the many churches closed by the Soviet Union and the many faithful Catholics being persecuted in Lithuania. The architect was John Mulokas, a Lithuanian architect from Chicago. Most of the work was done by Lithuanian craftsmen. The result is a fascinating blend of Lithuanian folk art and design.

The brickwork in the columns added onto the gable-front facade and the front wall itself are a display of Lithuanian folk art motifs as are the glass double doors which open into the sanctuary. The bell tower also incorporates Lithuanian motifs. The most outstanding features of the church, however, are the faceted slab glass windows and the carved wooden altars.

Behind the main altar is a stained glass panorama of crosses representing what are perhaps the most common symbols on the Lithuanian landscape - the crosses which appear along the roadsides, in yards, on hillsides, and in cemeteries. The panorama is a highly stylized interpretation of a hill in Lithuania which is covered with crosses, and reflects the more than 2,000 types found in that country. The side windows display Lithuanian style shrines and include symbols such as The Holy Trinity, Veronica's Veil, The Crown of Thorns, and Our Blessed Mother. They were fabricated by Adolf Baleska Studios of Chicago (Holy Cross 1964: 62-66) (Holy Cross 1966: n.p.).

The side altars, Our Lady of the Gates of Dawn and St. Casimir's altar, were designed by John Mulokas and represent important figures in Lithuanian Catholic culture. The bas-reliefs were made by Peter Vebra and the altars were made by Javarauskas of Chicago. The building incorporates the work of many other Lithuanian craftsmen, both from Chicago and within the parish itself. According to the parish history (1964: 66); the church design, with its incorporation of Lithuanian motifs, is the only church of its type in the United States.

Further expression of the continued vitality of this ethnic parish is found in the Shrine of the Three Crosses constructed on the grounds of Holy Cross in celebration of the Golden Jubilee in 1964-1965. These crosses honor "all the martyrs for the faith in the countries occupied by the Soviet Communists" (Holy Cross 1966: n.p.). The shrine was designed by the Lithuanian architect, Alfred Kulpavicius of Toronto, and the contractor was Valerijonas

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Sodeika of Chicago. The three crosses "symbolize the three crosses that were erected on a hill in Vilnius, the capital of Lithuania, in honor of the Franciscan fathers who were martyred for the faith in the fourteenth century" and which were destroyed by the Soviets in 1950 (Holy Cross 1966: n.p.). The style and ornamentation of each cross represents the three major regions of Lithuania: Zemaitija, Aukstaitija, and Suvalkija (Nottingham 1988: 43).

At present, the parish has about 250 parishioners and offers one mass in Lithuanian each week (Nottingham 1988: 43). Despite the fact that many of its members have never seen Lithuania, the church continues to educate younger members in the history and customs of the old country and gives older members a place to enjoy the familiar traditions of a home left behind many years ago. This congregation is particularly noteworthy for their ethnic persistence throughout the 20th century.

Although Hungarians were numerous in Dayton by 1900, the first Hungarian parish was not organized until April 22, 1907. This parish was Holy Name and was located in the West Side Colony on Conover Street. Funds were raised for church construction and the new building was dedicated May 9, 1909. The same year Holy Name Magyar School began operation in the basement of the church with one lay teacher and 44 pupils. The brick four-room school was erected in 1915, and by 1919 the student body had increased to 250 pupils. The parish house was built in 1914 (Zimmerman 1979: 63). Holy Name Church, the victim of vast demographic change and urban renewal, ceased operation in the 1970s. However, this church and the Hungarian Reformed church, located one-half block west of Holy Name, are the best reminders of the once bustling West Side Colony.

St. Stephen's Hungarian Roman Catholic Church in Old North Dayton began in 1912 as a mission of Holy Name to serve the Hungarians living in the Kossuth Colony (St. Stephen's n.d.: n.p.). Worship was first held in a building vacated by the Hungarian Reformed Church on Baltimore Street in the Kossuth Colony. This small chapel was dedicated as a mission church in 1919 (Zimmerman 1979: 63). St. Stephen's began to organize into a parish in 1936. The new church, designed by architect Edwin J. Schulte, was constructed from 1946-1952 (St. Stephen's n.d.: n.p.). On the front lawn of the church is a twelve foot statue of St. Stephen, the patron saint of Hungary. The artist is Robert C. Koepnick of Lebanon, Ohio, who also designed the gates of the Montgomery County Fairgrounds as well as the design in marble in front of the Dayton and Montgomery County Library (Nottingham 1988: 40).

One of the last ethnic parishes to be organized was St. Gabriel's Roumanian Greek Catholic Church which was established in 1916 by Rumanians who withdrew from Holy Name Hungarian Catholic Church. Many Rumanians actually lived in Hungary, and they disliked the dominant Hungarian Magyars and had no desire to attend their Roman rite churches. The congregation occupied a building located on Summit Street (now Dunbar Street) on the western edge of the West Side Colony. Little is known about this parish, and the building and the large number of Rumanians who resided in the West Side Colony have long since disappeared. The only evidence remaining of this once vital ethnic group is the brief references which appear in the written record (Doren ca.1917) (Zimmerman 1979: 63).

Although a majority of Poles, Lithuanians, and Hungarians who came into Dayton at the turn of the century were Catholic, a few belonged to Protestant denominations. In Hungary, the Protestants were visible all out of

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proportion to their small numbers for they produced large numbers of statesmen, writers, and artists. The only Protestant church founded by these Eastern European groups in Dayton was the Hungarian Reformed church called the First Magyar Reformed Church. Established about 1902, the church building was dedicated January 14, 1907. The church and rectory still stand on Blaine Street one-half block west of Holy Name. Between 1909-1913 the pastor also conducted services for Hungarians in the Kossuth Colony in the chapel located on Baltimore Street (Zimmerman 1979: 59-60). (Conover 1932: 424). When Dayton historian Charlotte Reeve Conover wrote about this congregation in 1932, they had purchased land at another location and were making plans for a new building (1932: 424). It is uncertain what happened to this congregation after they left their Blaine Street location in the 1940s, but they are no longer listed in Dayton directories.

The fabric of these ethnic parishes included a tightly woven network of societies and institutions to meet the emotional and physical needs of a communal group of people seeking to recreate the support systems of home. Perhaps the most powerful institution for the preservation of language and culture was the parochial school, often viewed by the native-born citizenry as a primary stumbling block in their attempts to Americanize the European immigrants. St. Adalbert's Polish Catholic Church and Holy Name Hungarian Catholic Church each operated a school from the very early days of their existence. St. Adalbert's curriculum provides an example of how these schools worked to preserve old country customs while also educating students in the customs and history of their new American home. According to the oral history of North Dayton published by the Dayton and Montgomery County Public Library (1988: 42):

"The subjects taught were parallel: history, geography, language. The difference was that morning sessions were taught in Polish - the history and language of Poland was stressed, along with its geography. In the afternoon all subjects were taught in English, and math added."

Holy Cross Lithuanian Catholic Church also planned to operate a school, but the Archdiocese denied permission because of the small size of the parish. Despite this, the church still managed to make sure that their young parishioners were instructed in Lithuanian culture and language. According to Mrs. Aldona Ryan (nee Latovaite), who was born in Old North Dayton in 1921, "twice a week at Holy Cross Church, there was a Lithuanian school where they taught the Lithuanian language, how to spell, read, write, literature, and culture" (Nottingham 1988: 5).

Although the parochial schools played a very important part in the preservation of immigrant culture, the majority of the immigrants' children attended public school. Children in Old North Dayton attended Webster or Allen school, while children in the West Side Colony attended Edison School.

A diverse collection of benefit societies, theatrical groups, and other societies organized within the parish met other needs of the immigrants and their children. A long list includes organizations such as the Lithuanian Workers' Alliance Lodge 69, St. Michael's Fraternal Society, the Young Ladies Sodality, and the Theatrical Club. The history of St. Adalbert's parish (1978) is filled with historic photographs of the Polish Dancers, the Drama Society, football, basketball and baseball teams, and the Housewives Band.

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Even today, the activities of some of these organizations illustrate the close relationship between Catholicism and the ethnic identity of these people, and clearly show the success of their ethnoreligion in maintaining strong feelings of parish responsibility toward European homelands which many members have never seen. The Knights of Lithuania Council 96, organized in 1917, states that its purpose is to "preserve the Catholic religion and Lithuanian nationality among its members, advance Lithuanian culture and aid Lithuania" (Holy Cross 1964: 81).

"Council Members assist in arranging the Lithuanian Independence Day programs, organize Lithuanian folk dance and song presentations, aid Lithuanian language classes. The Lithuanian Affairs Committee writes letters to newspapers and magazines, public officials, and others in the cause of regaining freedom for Lithuania and other enslaved nations" (Holy Cross 1964: 81-83).

Today, the congregation of Holy Cross continues its support of its occupied homeland. In recent months, the Shrine of the Three Crosses, located on the grounds of Holy Cross, has been draped in black in honor of the recent reassertion of Soviet power in Lithuania.

Within the secure cultural and social framework of the ethnic parish, the immigrants built a new life in the American urban environment. Parishioners attended their own church where "they had a familiar liturgy, listened to familiar sermons, and received absolution in their own language." In addition (Olson 1987: 116-117):

"On dozens of evenings each year, one or another of the parish societies sponsored a social event as part of the religious calendar. Both (ethnic) and American holidays were celebrated and various musical, athletic, or entertainment projects were undertaken....The parish and neighborhood had melted together at least in the consciousness of most its residents."

7. BLENDING IN: AFTER 1914

Alice Doren's description of living conditions in the West Side Colony and the North Dayton neighborhood was very different than those given by the older residents interviewed for the 1988 Dayton and Montgomery Public County Library publication, Old North Dayton: Portrait of a Neighborhood. Ms. Doren referred frequently to the crowded and unsanitary conditions of the ethnic community, particularly in the West Side Colony. In sharp contrast, many of the older residents commented on the cleanliness of the North Dayton neighborhood.

The difference could lie in the definition of "clean." Also, Ms. Doren's narrative seems to refer more to the West Side Colony, which by her own admission was much more crowded than North Dayton. Most likely, perhaps, is the difference in the time periods with which we are dealing. Alice Doren was writing in the late teens during the relatively early period of the ethnic community's existence while most of the persons interviewed were talking of the 1920s and 1930s. In the early period, many of the immigrants were single males or married men who had

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left their families in Europe until they could earn enough money to purchase land at home or could afford to bring their families here. A highly transient group, they were willing to live simply in less than ideal conditions to more quickly reach their economic goals. Furthermore, although conditions may not have seemed ideal to Ms. Doren, they may have been a vast improvement over the conditions they left behind.

It was the outcome of World War I which caused the immigrant mindset towards repatriation to change. The Treaty of Trianon, signed in 1920, effectively dismembered the Austro-Hungarian Empire and Poland bringing many to the realization that they had no homeland to return to. In addition, the absence of new immigration during the war years brought a lack of cultural reinforcement putting further distance between immigrants and their European homelands (Zimmerman 1979: 96). Restrictive immigration laws passed in the 1920s further isolated immigrants from European culture.

After years of living in the United States, many had begun to appreciate the American political and social environment. They began to grow accustomed to the greater possibilities for advancement that the American economic system offered. Furthermore, many had children who had been born in this country. In short, they had begun to Americanize. Some did repatriate, but many more stayed and began to turn their attention to building a comfortable life in their adopted homeland.

Many now actively began to pursue citizenship attending citizens's clubs and studying English and civics in night school (Zimmerman 1979: 94). As they became more of a part of mainstream American society, those who had saved every penny in anticipation of their return to Europe invested their savings in houses, automobiles, and other material benefits of life in industrial America (Vardy 1985: 95).

Despite this gradual blending in, however, the Eastern Europeans continued to preserve their Old World languages and traditions. This concept of cultural plurality - that they could be loyal Americans while retaining strong feelings for a home left behind - was never an insurmountable problem in their minds. Indeed, second and third generation members of these ethnic groups interviewed for the 1988 publication, Portrait of a Neighborhood, painted a comfortable picture of this duality. In North Dayton, native-born Americans and European immigrants came together to form a close-knit urban village for which feelings of loyalty and affection have survived down to the present day.

The following account by Mary Piekutowski is similar to many given by longterm residents of Old North Dayton. The daughter of Polish immigrants, she was born in Pittsburgh in 1907 and moved to North Dayton when she was three weeks old. Her parents spoke Polish at home, so she knew very little English when she began school at St. Adalbert's parochial school which she attended until she was sixteen years old. Her father worked for Lowe Brothers Paints for fifty years, and her husband worked there for thirteen years until the couple purchased a cafe on Valley Street. Describing the ethnic character of Old North Dayton after she and her husband moved to Paw Paw Street in 1945 she stated (Nottingham 1988: 50):

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"...when I moved here the people were very friendly.... They were Yugoslavians, Hungarians, Polish, Germans, and they acted like they knew me my whole life. They'd come and talk to me and welcome me in the neighborhood, and a lot of them couldn't talk English."

Perhaps the best description of life in Old North Dayton, however, was given by Mrs. Aldona Ryan (Latovaite). Mrs. Ryan, who has edited and written for Lithuanian-American periodicals all of her life, gives an account which seems to best represent life in Old North Dayton between 1915-1950.

Following the common pattern of chain migration, her father came to North Dayton in 1910 to join friends who had emigrated here from the Lithuanian city of Panevezys. For the first three years, he resided at a boarding house on Air Street and worked to save money to bring his bride-to-be to North Dayton. She came in 1913 and they were married at Holy Cross Lithuanian Catholic Church which at that time was just a basement. They then moved into a house at 226 Air Street where Mrs. Ryan was born. She lived there until she was married in 1943. Describing childhood memories she says (Nottingham 1988: 5-7, 84):

"...On our street, everybody was foreign. They were all mixed up, Germans, Irish, Polish, Hungarian, Lithuanian, etc. But, all of them, almost everybody were immigrants. In the evening in the summer, you'd hear all these different languages being spoken and you picked up a lot of it. I know quite a bit of German and Hungarian just from listening, playing with the kids, and hearing their mothers call them, etc."

"...everybody spoke their own language at home, but then you got out in the street. Well, until I was five years old I couldn't speak English. I went to kindergarten. By the time I was in the second grade, I was getting all A's and that wasn't unique. All us kids were like that. Anyway, the housewives were very clean. On Friday, when they'd clean the house, toward four or five o'clock, they'd sweep the street, clear to the middle of the street. The street was absolutely spotless, just like the inside of the house."

"...Everybody had a garden. We all raised chickens, ducks, and geese. We all had fruit trees. We had a grape arbor. We made our own home brew, root beer and wine....Once a year...a farmer would come and he'd bring a dressed hog.... We had a smokehouse in the back. The meat was smoked in the smokehouse. Then we had a garden house. The meat was hung on big poles across the rafters."

"...A very vital part of life in those days was belonging to a church. Most Old North Dayton residents were either Protestant or Roman Catholic. Both sects had services during the week....Many churches had their own youth groups designed to make the church the center of their parishioners' activities. When children grew old enough to start dating, most of them stayed within their own religious and ethnic groups. It was

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not unusual, though, for ethnic groups to mix at such affairs as picnics and bazaars. Every summer, our family went to the Polish Picnic, the Hungarian picnic, the German Picnic, the Lithuanian Picnic, etc."

..."I never had to go more than, well, between Kiser School and Troy and Valley Street and Holy Cross Church, of course, where we went three times a week. On Saturday, I always had to go to confession and on Sunday we always had to go to church twice because there were vespers in the afternoon and there was mass in the morning. During Lent we also went to church on Wednesday and Friday night besides Saturday and twice on Sundays."

Therefore, in the years following World War I, Lithuanians, Poles, and Hungarians preserved their culture and their ties with their homelands primarily through the Catholic parish, the center of the ethnic community. Special celebrations, classes in language and culture, masses said in Lithuanian, Polish, or Hungarian continued to tie the different generations to their place of origin. Their continued concern and assistance to these countries while being loyal American citizens illustrates the reality and workability of cultural dualism in the United States.

8. Ethnic Community: 1950 - 1966

Dayton's Eastern European ethnic community continued to thrive until the impact of population shifts, urban decline, and highway construction in the 1950s and 1960s ushered in a period of dramatic change. The West Side Colony was most heavily impacted. By the early 1950s, the colony had begun to lose its original ethnic composition as the second and third generations left and were replaced by African Americans who had moved into the West Side in increasing numbers after World War I. Troubled by absentee ownership and targeted for urban renewal, its deteriorated building stock became the object of demolition, particularly in the 1970s and 1980s. By 1991, approximately 75% of the neighborhood had been lost to the bulldozer. Still, significant parts of this historic colony remain, due largely to the efforts of an energetic neighborhood organization. The most important buildings are the Hungarian Magyar Reformed Church and rectory and the Holy Name Hungarian Catholic Church, school, and rectory.

The major impact on Old North Dayton has been the construction of highways. According to one resident:

"Expressways imposed the most wrenching change on North Dayton. Beginning in the late 1950s, hundreds of family homes were obliterated, first for the path of Route 4, then for the I-75 route. The highways had a powerful commercial impact. Hardest hit was the lower end of Troy Street, the most central of the two business districts."

These expressways "razed many old landmarks and split neighborhoods." In addition, many of the children and grandchildren of the immigrants left the neighborhood in favor of the wide lots and the more parklike atmosphere

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of the suburbs. In recent years, the neighborhood has also experienced the influx of a large Appalachian population which has further diminished its European ethnic character.

Despite the general decline of Eastern European ethnicity in many of the industrial cities of the northeast and midwest, this cultural plurality continues to be a significant element of urban life. Although the nature of being Polish-American, Hungarian-American, or Lithuanian-American has changed as language usage and the number of ethnic institutions have decreased, their ethnicity endures. Indeed, the Eastern Europeans have been more successful than many groups in the preservation of their Old World language, values, and customs. The reasons behind this success, however, is not entirely clear.

Of course, in the case of the Scotch, Irish, and English, there was little or no language barrier to slow their entry into American life. In contrast, the Germans had to learn English before they could become part of mainstream America. In fact, they, like the Eastern Europeans, regarded the retention of their language as a key to maintaining their cultural integrity. Nevertheless, despite their resolve to retain their Germanness through the retention of language and customs, they were much quicker to lose their cultural identity than the Poles, Hungarians, and Lithuanians.

Many have tried to attribute this disparity in German and Eastern European rates of assimilation to the two world wars, which made German identity unpopular, uncomfortable, and undesirable. And, undoubtedly, the war experience encouraged the decline of German culture. But a second explanation of their cultural persistence is the tendency of many Eastern European groups to be less occupationally mobile than other groups. E. P. Hutchinson in Immigrants and their Children, 1850-1950 (1956: 277) states that:

“Although the second generation as a whole shows little tendency to follow the occupational specializations of the immigrant generations, there are some national stocks that show a considerable degree of occupational continuity from one generation to the next. This is especially marked for the Polish, Hungarians, Czechoslovakians, Yugoslavians, Greek, French Canadians, and Mexican stock. Other national stocks, especially those of English-speaking origin, are quite completely merged into and widely dispersed in the labor force by the second generation.”

It is important, however, when considering the occupational distribution of the Eastern European immigrant population and their descendants to not underestimate the “extent to which every national stock is dispersed,...., throughout the entire range of occupations” (Hutchinson 1956: 267).

This tendency towards occupational persistence past the first generation can perhaps be attributed to the strength of Eastern European ethnoreligion which tightly intertwined ethnicity and Catholicism.

“For generations, the ethnic Catholics had been a blue-collar people, both institutionally and philosophically, valuing hard work as honorable and suspecting education and mobility for the threat they posed to religion and community life. While Anglo Protestants

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equated success with individual wealth and mobility, ethnic Catholics had opted for family stability and community integrity" (Olson 1987: 208).

After World War II, however, the children and grandchildren began to move away from the value systems of immigrant parents and grandparents adopting those of mainstream American society.

It is not the fact that the ethnic community has changed over time which is important. What is important is that, despite societal pressures to assimilate and the passage of time, this ethnicity continues to be an important feature of American urban culture. In North Dayton, many of the younger generation return from other areas to attend the ethnic churches and to participate in the Polish Club, the Lithuanian Club, and other ethnic organizations in the neighborhood. The nationality parishes continue to work as important institutions for the preservation of Eastern European customs and traditions. Despite the intrusion of freeways and demographic change, the ethnic character of Old North Dayton survives. The pride of these Eastern European immigrants and their descendents is best stated by Mrs. Aldona Ryan (Latovaite), who painted such a rich visual picture of life there in the 1920s and 1930s:

"After I typed those pages there, I could think of ten more pages. Because I loved it. I'm very proud. I know that it was not one of the richest sections of the city and a lot of people thought that the foreign people were maybe peasants and ignorant. That's not true. My father was a musician. Every Saturday my brother and I had to sit through the Metropolitan Opera on radio. It wasn't even in Lithuanian or English. The three of us, my mother would have her house-work, but we set through the whole opera, Saturday after Saturday" (Nottingham 1988: 12).

But in spite of its apparent durability, it is a part of our heritage which we cannot afford to take for granted for its fragility is also very real. As the American Catholic Church closes more and more parishes, as the availability of nationality priests declines, and as the numbers in their congregations decrease, the future of the ethnic parishes becomes more and more uncertain. Only a few years ago, the Church hierarchy strongly suggested the merging of St. Stephen Hungarian Church and Holy Cross Lithuanian Church. Both parishes resisted the merger, but they may not always be able to maintain separate parishes. At this time, St. Stephen no longer has a Hungarian priest, although from time to time the congregation invites a Hungarian priest to hold a service in the Magyar language. At Holy Cross, Father Katarskis, who immigrated from Lithuania in 1945, would like to retire, but he stays because he feels that it is unlikely that Holy Cross will be able to secure the services of another Lithuanian priest.

As generation takes the place of generation, it is impossible to predict the future of Dayton's Eastern European ethnic community. At present, its continued vitality acts as a very visible reminder of the importance of ethnicity in Dayton's urban culture. As an immigrant nation, the story of ethnicity in America occupies a central place in our national social history. As time moves on, however, the built environment the ethnic community leaves behind may ultimately be the only reminder of this basic building block of our American heritage.

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PROPERTY TYPE: Ethnic Church

Description: The ethnic church is one which was established by an ethnic group to meet its particular ethnoreligious needs. Most of these churches were constructed between 1885-1925, but they may be as recent as the 1960s. They may be a notable example of a particular style, such as the Gothic or Romanesque Revival, or they may be a vernacular building whose features and details document the ethnicity of the parishioners. The interior of the ethnic church will include features which document the important interrelationship between the religion and ethnicity of the immigrant group.

Significance: To be eligible for the National Register, this type must meet Criterion A for its association with the ETHNIC HERITAGE and RELIGION Areas of Significance. It also meets Criterion A of Criteria Considerations (Exceptions), and it may also be eligible under Criterion G of Criteria Considerations (Exceptions). This property type is the most visible reminder of the Eastern European immigration into Dayton between 1885-1915. The ethnic church, which offered its parishioners a wide variety of activities and organizations, was the cultural center of the ethnic community. It worked not only to preserve the language and traditions of a particular group, but it also assisted the immigrants' adjustment to American urban society. The ethnic church documents the close ties between the religion and ethnicity of these Eastern European groups as well as the immigrants' important contribution to the character of Dayton's urban culture. In addition, the ethnic church documents the cultural persistence of these immigrant groups past the first generation and illustrates the continued importance of this cultural plurality throughout most of the twentieth century.

This property type may also be eligible under Criterion C for its association with the ARCHITECTURE Area of Significance. The building may be an exceptional example of a particular style or it may be an excellent example of a vernacular building type. An additional area of significance that may apply to this property type is ART, if the property represents the aesthetic values of an ethnic group associated with the property.

Registration Requirements: To be eligible for the National Register under Criterion A, the building must have been constructed by an Eastern European ethnic group to meet religious and other cultural needs. The building should retain its original dimensions, including height and depth, and should exhibit enough of its original fenestration and stylistic features so that its original appearance is clearly expressed.

To be eligible under Criterion C, the building must exhibit integrity of design and setting. Integrity of scale, materials, and stylistic features and details are also important. Additions are acceptable as long as they do not obscure the original appearance of the building. For properties being nominated for artistic significance, a high degree of integrity of workmanship, materials, design and setting is important.

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PROPERTY TYPE: Commercial Building

Description: This type is generally one to three stories high and is of frame or masonry construction. The building may be a modest, small-scale structure or it may be a more substantial commercial block. Buildings will vary widely in style from the Italianate, Queen Anne, and Craftsman styles to the unornamented vernacular types of the early twentieth century. This type frequently combines residential and commercial functions with living space in the back section and/or upper stories of the building. The building may be a part of a residential streetscape or it may be part of a linear business district. It functions to meet the retail needs of the Eastern European ethnic neighborhood. This property will generally date from 1885-1935.

Significance: This property type meets Criterion A for its association with the ETHNIC HERITAGE and SOCIAL HISTORY Areas of Significance. It is important for its association with Dayton's Eastern European ethnic community. These immigrants moved into relatively compact geographical areas in west and northeast Dayton mostly between 1885-1920. The dominant groups were the Hungarians, Poles, and Lithuanians. Many of these business establishments were operated by members of the Eastern European groups, but others were operated by Germans, Irish, and native-born Americans who were part of the West Side and North Dayton urban neighborhoods. These business establishments were patronized by the Eastern European ethnic community and not only met the physical needs of these immigrants but often served as central gathering places for a specific ethnic group.

This property type may also meet Criterion C for its association with the ARCHITECTURE Area of Significance. The building may be an excellent example of the Italianate, Queen Anne, or Craftsman styles or it may be an outstanding example of a type such as the plain, vernacular commercial buildings which appear on the urban landscape in the 1900-1935 period.

Registration Requirements: To be eligible for the National Register under Criterion A, the building must have served the needs of Dayton's Eastern European ethnic community. The building should retain its original dimensions, including height and depth, and should exhibit enough of its original fenestration and other definitive features such as brackets and embrication so that its original appearance is clearly expressed.

To be eligible under Criterion C, the building must retain a higher degree of integrity especially as regards the treatment of the exterior walls. Integrity of setting is also very desirable. The storefront should be intact or should have undergone only very minor changes as should the fenestration and other important stylistic features and details.

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METHODOLOGY:

In September 1989, the Montgomery County Historical Society began a survey of the City of Dayton to identify buildings and districts potentially eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. This survey was a part of Dayton's Programmatic Memorandum of Agreement with the State Historic Preservation Office and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation. It included a windshield reconnaissance of the City of Dayton, pedestrian survey of some sections, and a preliminary literature search. Two geographical areas - Old North Dayton and the West Side Colony - were identified as representing the large immigration of Eastern Europeans into Dayton at the turn of the century.

A more detailed literature search was then undertaken to gain a better understanding of this chapter of Dayton's history. Community histories, parish histories, oral histories, theses and dissertations, maps, and contemporary accounts located at public and university libraries and the Society were used to explore the history of Dayton's Eastern European community. Monographs on United States immigration history in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries and European histories were also employed to see how Dayton's immigration history fit into national patterns.

Property types, as well as the integrity requirements for these types, were determined after pedestrian survey of the West Side Colony and Old North Dayton. Integrity requirements were also based on knowledge of the integrity of properties located in turn of the century working class neighborhoods in other parts of the city.

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