

Alexis Dony

Pastor 1842 – 1849

Dony was hired in March of 1842 for a guaranteed salary of one hundred fifty dollars a year plus one hundred dollars for the school.

Under his watch, the church building gained a foundation, a stucco covering for the walls, a tower, bells, a pulpit, and benches for the church and school.

All school necessities were purchased.

The congregation established first library in Belleville at St. Paul's Church.

The school was regularly attended by 40 to 50 children, even from English and Catholic families, because there was still no other school available.

Every Sunday, church was held. Occasionally, even Catholic services by the missionaries from Cahokia, Illinois. This was understandable because the number of Germans was small, so they gladly united for the preservation of their interest and tolerated each other's divergent religious conviction.

On July 11, 1845, Dony was to officiate at the marriage of Charles Kettler and Rosalie Huelbig. However, in crossing the Kaskaskia River, which was in flood, the mother of the bride, the bride-to-be, her two sisters, and a friend were drowned. Their carriage overturned in a flooded ravine next to the river while approaching the ferry. The next day, Dony performed a funeral service instead of a wedding.

Dony left in 1849, ironically, being called to pastoral duties in Dutch Hill, Illinois. Dutch Hill was a small town on the east side of the Kaskaskia River where the afore-mentioned bride-to-be had originally lived with her family.

Information Sources:

1909 70<sup>th</sup> Jubilee Booklet of St. Paul's by Reverend Otto F. Pessel.

Translation from the German by Lynn C. Koehler of our congregation, 1973

Research by:

Carol Kirby of the Belleville Public Library, Main Branch, Spring, 2016.

Belleville Daily Advocate newspaper article, July 19, 1845.