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The Catholic Community League of Canton, Incorporated: An Historical Progress Report

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THE CATHOLIC COMMUNITY LEAGUE OF CANTON, INCORPORATED:

AN HISTORICAL PROGRESS REPORT

by

Helen L. Meyer

A Thesis Submitted to the Faculty of the School of
Social Work of Loyola University in Partial
Fulfillment of the Requirements for the
Degree of Master of Social Work

February

1952
LIFE

Helen L. Meyer was born in Canton, Ohio, December 8, 1922.

She was graduated from Villa Angela Academy, Cleveland, Ohio, June, 1941, and from Ursuline College, Cleveland, Ohio, June, 1945 with the Degree of Bachelor of Arts.

Prior to beginning graduate studies in February, 1949, she was employed as a case aide by the Catholic Community League of Canton, Inc.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I. INTRODUCTION</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Purpose of the study</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Focus and limitation of the study</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. Sources and method of presentation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. Methodology</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E. Significance of the study</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. THE FIRST DECADE 1919-1929</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. The City of Canton, Ohio</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Early social problems and services</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. Organization of the Catholic Community League</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. Early policy and program</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E. Financing and membership</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F. Social planning and expansion of service</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. THE SECOND DECADE 1929-1939</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Existing program and subsequent changes in services</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Child welfare services</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. Family welfare services</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. Health program</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E. Diocesan affiliation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F. Incorporation and licensing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G. Finances</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H. Related studies</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV. THE THIRD DECADE 1939-1949</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Catholic child emigration</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Emergency needs resultant from World War II</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. Post-war planning in the agency</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. Catholic Community League's stake in community planning</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V. CONCLUSION</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. General summary</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Conclusions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## APPENDIX

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Chart of casework services</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Chart of health services</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Chart of organization</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## BIBLIOGRAPHY                          | 68   |
CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

The first World War brought about many fundamental changes in the field of social work. Every community had been awakened to the needs of its people, a social consciousness of responsibility had been placed on every citizen. Canton, Ohio was no exception to this kind of progressive thinking and action. Catholic Community League was created in answer to community need in that post-war era. It has been a service agency in the community since that time and at the present is interested in maintaining the best program for serving the needs of people. Its existence and program of service are evidence of community planning and organisation in the light of religious affiliation. In order to serve the needs of the community best, the agency strives to remain attuned to progressive thinking and action, recognising the need for flexibility and the capacity to change.

Purpose of this Study

The purpose of this study is to present a history of the Catholic Community League of Canton, Incorporated, from its organization in 1919 to 1960. The study emphasises the changing needs of this community and the consequent changes in service and administration of this agency. It points up its progressiveness, its flexibility and capacity to change, its participation in community social planning, and its cooperation with other agencies.
Focus of the Study

The major focus of this study is to show the transition of the Catholic Community League from a volunteer group work organization to a casework agency. The purpose of the study is primarily historical. It is not intended to be evaluative; however, an historical presentation actually becomes an evaluation of the agency's past services in relation to the needs of Catholic in the Canton area. Historical data shows the growing breadth of the agency program, its integration into the Diocesan Catholic Charities planning, and the effects of the federal social security and other national programs on the agency as they are administered at the local level.

The writer does not intend to analyze or interpret the factors pointed up in the process of this study. The data to be presented has been deemed accurate by persons connected with the agency. Minutes of Board meetings, used as documentary material, have been approved as read at monthly board meetings under parliamentary procedure.

Sources and Method of Presentation

The historical method is employed in the presentation of data concerning the Catholic Community League. The writer has read all available material in the agency. The review of primary sources includes: (1) minutes of board meetings from September 1919 through December 1949, (2) annual reports of the agency from 1925 to 1950, (3) all correspondence relative to policy, function, and service, (4) the constitution and by-laws of the agency, and (5) interviews with persons, lay and professional, who have been actively associated with the Catholic Community League over a period of years.
The writer has assembled the data under topical headings. Each topic is discussed in its relation to the total agency's function and shows the agency's role in community planning. The aims and purposes of the agency are presented as stated in the original charter of the Catholic Community League.

Chapter II includes a brief history of the city of Canton, Ohio; the social problems and services existing prior to the creation of the agency. It includes a description of the organization of the agency in the first decade and its growth and development from 1919-1929. The second decade, 1929-1939, comprises Chapter III in which the writer shows the continued development of service to meet changing needs; the definitive areas of a casework program and the Catholic Community League's integration with the broadening of the national, state and diocesan welfare programs. In Chapter IV covering the third decade, the period, 1939-1949, the writer emphasizes the changes that took place in the agency in the light of the war emergency and the post-war problems. A summarization of the Catholic Community League's place in the community setting with general conclusions and an evaluation of the study are handled in Chapter V.

The writer concludes the study with an Appendix containing the organizational charts to show the agency administration at the diocesan level with respect to function within the agency; and the casework program as it serves the community.

Methodology

The writer has divided the thirty year period into three decades,
beginning with 1919 through 1949. Three periods not only have national sig-
nificance but formulate the basis for presenting the earnest endeavor of citi-
sens to meet community needs. By consideration of each ten year period the
growing breadth of the agency and its program can be presented and evaluated
with respect to the prevailing economic conditions. Catholic Community League's
interest, participation, and cooperation in national and state program are
discussed as well as the agency's place in the community picture.

The period from 1919 characterizes the era following World War I.
In the second decade, 1929-1939, the depression is of significance on the
national scale, and the third decade, 1939-1949, involves the pre-World War
II era, the War itself, and post-war times.

Significance of the Study

No previous history of this agency has been written. This study has
been undertaken at the request of the board and staff of the Catholic Community
League who are interested in securing a correlated presentation of the agency's
background and growth. The agency is of the opinion that this study covering
its past experiences will be useful with respect to future planning.

A unified presentation of documentary evidence indicates the past,
present and future need for the existence of the agency and it substantiates
the value of its program to individuals and to the community.

The kinds of service required of the Catholic Community League
reflect the conditions and the needs of the community. The private welfare
agency has a dual responsibility; to the individual seeking help and to the
community which it serves. The writer believes this investigation is justified
since it shows that the Catholic Community League has grown and progressed in function and service to the Catholic population of the Canton area.
CHAPTER II
THE FIRST DECADE 1919-1929

In order to understand more fully the effectiveness of the creation of the Catholic Community League, facts concerning the City of Canton, Ohio will be presented. Social problems and existing services will be discussed in order to validate the need for such an agency. Presentation of facts concerning the early beginnings of the Catholic Community League will be discussed to indicate the progress that the agency made in the first decade of its existence not only in relation to the kinds of service rendered but also in its contribution to the community.

The City of Canton, Ohio

Canton, Ohio, is located in Stark County in the northeastern section of Ohio, approximately sixty miles south of Lake Erie. It is a city of diversified industries and is located in the heart of the steel producing area of the United States. Canton has over two hundred manufacturing industries, attracting people from all over the north central states. Industrial development began on a large scale in the community at the turn of the present century. The population had increased from 2600 in 1850 to 30,000 in 1900. The United States census shows a population increase from 87,091 in 1920 to 104,906 in 1930; to 108,401 in 1940 prior to World War II. The 1950 Census shows an additional increase to 281,560.

1 Canton, Ohio Chamber of Commerce Report, 1950.
Canton history dates to 1769 when Besaleel Wells, a surveyor, obtained a land grant from the Connecticut Land Company to explore and survey the Western Reserve Territory. Mr. Wells located, surveyed, and platted the city in 1806. In 1815 Canton was incorporated into a village, in 1834 a town, and in 1854 as a city. Nationality background of the city of Canton is predominantly German, English and Irish. Since World War I there has been a generous influx of Italian, Roumanian, Polish, and Slovakian immigrants. These however, as do the Chinese, Japanese, Mexican and Negro, constitute minority groups.

The city is operated under a federal form of government. Officials consist of a Mayor, Safety Director, Service Director, Auditor, Treasurer and Solicitor. The City Council is composed of fifteen members: a president, three councilmen-at-large, and one councilman from each of the eleven wards.

Educational facilities consist of twenty-seven public elementary schools and four high schools, one being a specialized training school. The parochial school system has eight elementary schools and one central high school.

Canton has ninety churches representing thirty-three different religious affiliations. These include seventy-three Protestant, fourteen Catholic, and three Jewish congregations.

**Early Social Problems and Services**

Interest in Welfare endeavors was first supported by community

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2 Edward T. Heald, Besaleel Wells, Canton, Ohio, 1947.
planning when the Canton Association of Charities was incorporated as a private agency in 1887. This agency later became known as the Family Service Society. Its function was organized family relief. With the new focus on individualized assistance in the field of Social Work, the program of the Family Service Society became more defined and related to specific family problems other than relief.

Prior to World War I, the five Catholic parishes of the city were engaged in volunteer work of a religious nature. This consisted mainly of religious instruction to children and encouraging fallen-away Catholics to return to the Church.

Following World War I, the City of Canton was beset with family problems which fell into three distinct categories: (1) homeless and orphaned children, (2) unmarried mothers and (3) immigrant families.

Many organizations and clubs in Canton had philanthropic interests which took them into areas of weakness, where social reform and human welfare were concerned. Although the number of Catholics in these organizations was small, they were in a large measure responsible for pioneering in religious and social service work among Catholics in the area. Much of the initiative which later brought about the founding of the Catholic Community League can be traced to their zeal.

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4 "Activities Report to the Canton Woman’s Club", by Clare Vignos, 1920.
During the influenza epidemic that followed World War I, Catholic men and women comprised the leaders of volunteer groups who came forth to meet the emergency needs of families where members were ill. The volunteers and leaders in the community were greatly concerned about the large number of children who were left orphaned or dependent because of their parents' death from influenza. The needs of dependent children were being met in part by placement at Fairmont Children's Home and St. Louis Orphanage. Many children were also placed in Cleveland institutions through the efforts of pastors and interested relatives, but those large numbers who could not be accepted in institutions were necessarily the problem of the community. Volunteer groups of Catholic laymen under the guidance of parish priests sought to find homes for children within the parishes to which the children belonged. Because of the cultural element which existed in Canton, parish neighborhoods were geographically distributed by nationality and race. While the epidemic itself was not restricted to boundaries, those neighborhoods in which poor housing and sanitation were most prevalent suffered the greatest hardships.

The Family Service Society was licensed by the State of Ohio to study and approve boarding homes, but due to the great demands made upon the agency at that time, results were not satisfactory. In the emergency, the religious aspect had lost its significance and the numbers of homeless Catholic children

5 Statement of Grace McGowan, personal interview.
6 The Stark County home for dependent children.
7 Discontinued in 1930.
gave little opportunity to the selection of homes on an individual basis. Rather, the idea of overall housing seemed to be the immediate answer. Because of the growing concern over religious training of Catholic children placed in Protestant homes, an appeal was made through parish priests for boarding homes and also for free homes where children would be safeguarded and instructed in their religious duties.

With the recognition of the specific need for a placement program for Catholic children, plus the growing concern of the community to meet the problems arising from the War, it was found that volunteer efforts within parish groups were not the direct answer to remedial efforts. The Canton Deanery was asked by the Bishop of the Cleveland Diocese, under whose jurisdiction Canton was included, to oversee the joint planning of a united volunteer group. Due to the pressure of the times, the problems of the Catholics in Canton could no longer be handled by the pastors or by the Family Service Society. Catholic laymen who served on the advisory board of the Family Service Society coupled efforts with the parish volunteer groups and the Canton Deanery to determine the need for a Catholic service agency.

It was thought that the creation of an organization similar in function to that of the Family Service Society but serving the needs of the Catholic population would warrant a better service for the entire community. The division of service on a religiously affiliated basis seemed to fall within the scope of planning of the National Catholic War Council; thus the seed for

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8 Statement of Grace McGowan, personal interview.
9 Now the National Catholic Welfare Council.
establishing the Catholic Community League was planted.

The volunteer groups met with civic leaders, members of the Board of the Family Service Society, members of the Deanery, and interested citizens to submit their findings in respect to the needs of Catholics and the advantages of available service for Catholics, rendered by Catholics. A tentative program of service was set forth based on an understanding of causes of social problems and some corrective planning.

Organization of the Catholic Community League

On July 31, 1919, a general meeting was called in Canton. Two field representatives from the National Catholic War Council were engaged to define the goals of operation of such an agency on a local basis. In direct relation to planning for the Canton area, committees were formed. One man and one woman were selected from each of the five parishes upon the recommendation by their pastors. Under the guidance of the field representatives, the first two committees were dedicated to the interests of determining need and of setting up some program for remedial planning in the areas of child welfare and family welfare respectively. These committees in turn selected additional members who were to comprise the health and recreation groups.

These four committees acted as an Executive Committee in both advisory and administrative capacities and exercised full authority over all activities of the groups. On August 19, 1919, the Executive Committee met and drew up a Constitution in which it set forth the purpose of the newly created agency.

10 General Report to the Catholic Community League Board, April 6, 1920.
The purpose reads:

The Catholic Community League of Canton, Ohio, is organized for philanthropic purposes— to promote the physical, intellectual and moral welfare of the Citizens of Canton and vicinity— to establish, finance and control social service activities, community centers, recreational centers, etc.11

In August 1919, the first paid staff member was sent to the Catholic Community League upon the recommendation of the National Catholic War Council. This person was given the title of Executive Secretary. It was her duty to oversee the committee program and to carry out the newly formed agency purpose as set forth by the Executive Committee. A small staff of volunteers was maintained to do active work under the newly appointed executive. A rudimentary program was outlined by way of introducing the volunteers not only to the field of Social Work, but also to the types of problems they were to meet on the local level. They became acquainted with services given by national programs and other agencies in the Canton area and in other cities, and were encouraged to familiarize themselves with state law and court procedure and function.

On April 6, 1920, the agency held its first election of board officers, and a legal advisor was appointed to handle the affairs of the Catholic Community League.12


12 Catholic Community League, Minutes of Board Meeting, April 6, 1920.
Early Policy and Program

Intake policy was determined by the scope of service and the ability of the agency to foresee adequate planning. It was defined only to the extent that no one was turned away and the staff was most sympathetic. All decisions involving case situations were discussed and voted upon at Board meetings. The Board outlined instructions for the handling of cases while the executive assigned cases to the volunteers and supervised their activities.

Under the new executive and upon the decision of the Board, the program was dedicated to work with children. A three point program was devised based upon the needs indicated. These were: (1) a placement program for homeless and orphaned children, (2) counseling and assistance with planning for unmarried mothers, and (3) service to immigrants. Upon request some family counseling was given in the areas of budgeting, child care and health.

Although the practice of institutional placement was still prevalent in the field of social work, the staff of the Catholic Community League was leaning toward foster home care for children in its thinking. Its placement program continued to function in joint cooperation with the Family Service Society. Names of couples and families interested in opening their homes to children were secured through application to the parish priest. Catholic homes were investigated and licensed by the Family Service Society upon referral by the Catholic Community League. Supervision of children in Catholic homes was maintained by the Catholic Community League and board was paid by the Family Service Society.
With the creation of the Catholic agency, closer affiliation was initiated with the Director\textsuperscript{13} of the Diocesan Institutions so that with planning, facilities and protection were made available for unmarried mothers from the Canton area. For girls who could not afford payment or whose families were financially unable or refused help, a work program was instituted whereby the girls were able to work in the institutions and care for their children. Although it was the policy of the maternity home to keep mother and child together, there were exceptional cases where adoption seemed to be the better plan. Those few were permitted to place their babies in the Diocesan orphanage for subsequent adoption. Girls were, however, encouraged to keep their babies since the philosophy of the times was that responsibility for one child would discourage second offenses.\textsuperscript{14}

Because of the post-war economic situation, the expansion of industries, and the changing emphasis of social standards regarding employment of women, the Catholic Community League assumed responsibility for a club which housed young single women who had come from surrounding villages to work\textsuperscript{15} in Canton. The offices of the Catholic Community League were established in this club in order that the social worker could supervise the evening activities of the girls. Gradually, due to the large numbers of cases brought to the attention of the Juvenile Court, teen age girls cited for minor transgressions were redeployed to the custody of the Catholic Community League and resided in the

\textsuperscript{13} now Bishop Charles H. LeBlond of St. Joseph, Missouri.

\textsuperscript{14} Statement of Grace McGowan, personal interview.

\textsuperscript{15} Ibid.
club, while awaiting hearing or Court decisions.

Because of the problems faced by immigrants coming to America, the National Catholic War Council had initiated a program of referral service at ports of embarkation. Those Catholic persons having relatives or friends in the Canton area and who wished to settle in the vicinity were referred by the National Catholic War Council to the Catholic Community League for help. This included help in obtaining living quarters and work possibilities. They were introduced to the priests in whose parish they located and were given some interpretation regarding the community, citizenship, finances, and the like.

Recreational centers served as a method of reaching immigrant parents by working with their children. Because of the laxity in regard to religious obligations, particularly in the Italian section of the city, considerable effort was made toward social planning in order to encourage children to attend group instructions. Immigrant parents were encouraged to see that their children attended and participated in recreational activities.16 Gibbons House,17 a neighborhood settlement in the heart of the Italian section, was formerly under the patronage of the Guild of the Little Flower, a Catholic women's organization whose members volunteered to give religious instruction to children. This settlement was taken over as one of the first such projects under agency auspices. The volunteers of the Guild continued to service the center. Although catechetical instruction remained the goal, clubs which had

16 Ibid.

17 Catholic Community League, progress report to Board, 1922.
combined activities to fulfill educational and recreational needs for boys and girls were organized under the direction of the Catholic Community League. Gibbons House had few facilities, but girls here were taught sewing, the art of dress making, and the rudiments of cooking and meal planning. Some instruction was given to teen age girls concerning cleanliness and hygiene. For boys there were supervised sports, crafts, wood work, scouting, and the like. A choir was formed of teen age boys and girls to encourage attendance at Sunday Mass.

Some attempt was made to orient parents, particularly the Italian immigrant mother with her many children, who was having difficulty in rearing her children in a new country. There were sewing and nutrition classes for women. Volunteer workers went into homes and assisted women with budgetary problems, health difficulties, and diet procedures. Women were taught the rudiments of cleanliness and sanitation. Immigrants were urged to obtain citizenship and language instruction. Interpretative services were placed at their disposal. The agency worked with the Juvenile Court in an effort to rehabilitate youngsters in correct thinking by providing recreational outlets with educational aspects. Parents were given help and interpretation if a child had become a ward of the Juvenile Court.

Financing and Membership

During the first year of the League's existence the cost of the program was underwritten by the National Catholic War Council. Gradually, as needs were recognized and services expanded to meet them, partial support came through private donations and from the parishes of Canton. The National
Catholic War Council continued to contribute funds on a percentage basis and assumed responsibility for salary payments for the executive.

With the cooperation of the parish priests and the approval of the Canton Deanery, the Board was able to create a membership fund, whereby the Catholics in the Canton area could obtain membership in the Catholic Community League by payment of one dollar per year to the fund. This money was payable through the parishes. Later the yearly membership campaign was taken over by the agency itself. The annual appeal was made at the Christmas season in order to help provide an appropriate Christmas for needy Catholic families. It was felt that in this way, the Catholics in Canton would become acquainted with the work done by the agency and that the age-old Catholic philosophy of caring for the poor would become a realistic responsibility to the layman. Annually, by mailing pamphlets and appeal letters containing a report of yearly expenditures, the agency fulfilled a two-fold purpose: publicity and an appeal for funds through membership.

Social Planning and Expansion of Service

In 1923 the Canton Welfare Federation was created as an incorporated association of privately supported welfare agencies of the city. Its major function was to act as the collecting and allocating agency of community chest funds. The Catholic Community League was invited to join the Federation.

18 Catholic Community League, Minutes of Board Meeting, September 24, 1919.

Through this affiliation, the agency became more financially secure; it was able to expand its program by securing full time paid personnel; its financial status became more defined, and the cost of operation could be proposed on a yearly basis.

In accordance with the progressive planning in the field of social work, and the agency's recognition and acceptance by the community, in 1927 the Board voted to employ only professionally trained personnel, to set standards and to define policy. It was at this time that the Catholic Community League initiated a program of casework service\(^\text{20}\) which gradually was to replace the group work activities. The Board ceased to function in an administrative capacity and became an advisory council to the agency in the administration of its program. With the expansion of the program and because of the regular working hours for staff members it was necessary to secure more adequate office facilities. The new trends surrounding confidentiality and interviewing techniques brought about a more objective attitude regarding the handling of cases. Case names were withheld at Board meetings, although situations continued to be discussed for planning.

Through the organized efforts of community planning and approval of the Board, it was determined that Gibbons House should be abandoned; the catechetical work became the responsibility of the parish in the Italian section. The remaining services became an integrated part of the Catholic Community League's program rendered from agency offices. The girls' club was placed under

\(^{20}\) Statement of Grace McGowan, personal interview.
the supervision of a resident house mother until such time as it could be disbanded. The Juvenile Court policy was also undergoing revision at this time. Plans were being formulated to meet Court commitments and pending cases by establishing a detention home with space reserved for teen age girls.

As the casework approach to problems became more defined and boarding home care came into vogue as a remedial measure to alleviate family pressures, the Catholic Community League found that it was not equipped to assume the broad proportions of such a program. Those families requesting placement of their children were referred to the Family Service Society after the initial investigation.

The definition of casework services for the Catholic Community League was based upon the areas of need,21 that is: (1) child welfare, (2) family welfare, and (3) health. The fourth area, that of recreation, became the responsibility of the Knights of Columbus and the Young Men's Christian Association. Relief continued to be temporary and only food was given. This was provided by parishes, organisations, clubs and private donors.

The Catholic Community League was fortunate in its efforts to obtain trained personnel. The agency was able to increase its volume and scope of service. Social consciousness on the community level made for the acceptance of the agency and its program.

21 Catholic Community League, Minutes of Board Meeting, November 17, 1927.
CHAPTER III
THE SECOND DECADE 1929-1939

When the economic depression of the 1930's struck, Canton was totally unprepared for the mass unemployment which followed in its wake. Through the declaration of a national emergency, public work relief programs and the Federal Emergency Relief Administration sought to alleviate the pressures placed upon the private welfare agency. With the revision of the federal social security program and the subsequent expansion in public agencies, the private welfare agency faced stringent evaluation of its services and the administration of voluntary social work.

By 1935, through community planning, private agency programs were beginning to be revised and modified, their purpose and goals somewhat defined. Greater concentration was given to family welfare, better and more specific provisions were made in children's services, and the new accent on health measures and mental hygiene opened many related areas of challenge to the private agency.¹ Catholic Community League accepted the challenge and continued its service to Catholic families.

Existing Program and Subsequent Changes

In 1930 the casework program of the Catholic Community League continued to be undifferentiated with emphasis on child welfare services. The

program included: (1) child welfare, (2) family welfare, (3) health, and (4) social planning.

The Canton Welfare Federation was faced with meeting the rising costs incurred in the support of children placed in institutions and homes. A survey\(^2\) of placed children indicated that few parents were financially able to support their children. Many of these foster children were totally dependent, neglected, or orphaned. In 1929, the Board of County Commissioners assumed financial responsibility for those children who were deemed dependent by the Juvenile Court. The long-time dependent child or orphan was considered public responsibility. Children already placed by private agencies in homes or institutions were permitted to remain there, with the Board of Commissioners paying the cost of care. Fairmount Children's Home, the Stark County Orphanage under the jurisdiction of the county commissioners, was ordered to accept only those children who were committed to them by the courts. Orphaned Catholic children placed in Catholic homes continued to be supervised by the Catholic Community League although support was paid from public funds.

From 1929 to 1933 dependent children in Stark County were the responsibility of the Board of County Commissioners. In 1933 with the federal allocation of Reconstruction Finance Corporation funds, the responsibility shifted from the county to federal financing, but the program continued to be administered through the Board of Commissioners. In 1934 the financial responsibility for support of placed children was resumed by the county. In 1935

\(^2\) "History of Public Funds used by Private Agencies", a joint report of the Children's Council, January 30, 1940.
the Stark County Board of Public Assistance, which administered the public child welfare program through the Juvenile Court, assumed the responsibility for all eligible dependent children living in their own or relatives' homes. 3

In 1939 the use of state relief funds for support payments for children in Stark County was declared illegal under the Ohio Code. This included children placed by the Family Service Society and Children's Bureau, the Catholic Community League, and those placed by Fairmount Children's Home under their placing-out plan. Also included were those children in the institution itself. A Children's Council was appointed to study the total child care program as it existed and was administered in the county, and to formulate sound public-private planning. The Council consisted of members from the two private agencies and from Fairmount Children's Home, the latter representing the county agency. An agreement was reached whereby the Board of Commissioners was to pay board for all children who were deemed dependent and the public child care agency was to be the supervising agency. Because of the large number of children involved, the transfer from private to public agency care was gradual and extended over a period of one year. 4

Child Welfare Services

In June, 1929, the Catholic Community League developed a Catholic child care program 5 which included casework service and placement and supervision of children in relatives' homes, institutions, and in foster homes.

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3 Anna M. Schneider, "History of Homefinding Department of the Catholic Community League from 1919 to 1937", August 4, 1937.
4 Ibid.
5 Ibid.
Under the newly established child care program 6 (see chart No. 1, page in Appendix), foster homes constituted four different types of placement: (1) adoptive, (2) wage, (3) free, and (4) boarding homes.

Casework and supervision of children in their own homes included handling problems of maladjustment and behavior difficulties. Some attempt was made to bring about a better understanding by the parent of the child and his difficulties. Parents having a retarded or handicapped child were helped to understand the child's limitations and capacities. This interpretation included distribution of reading material, and evaluating education facilities and information regarding placement facilities. Referrals were made for service and treatment. The handicapped adolescent was encouraged to participate in recreational opportunities provided for these children.

Also included in this group were referrals from schools where children were failing or present disciplinary problems to the teachers. In 1957, the Catholic Community League was asked by the principal 7 of the parochial elementary schools to complete a study 8 of sixty such children. In cooperation with their parents, these children were examined physically and psychologically. Social histories covering birth, early development, personality, and school progress were taken from the families. The group ranged

6 Ibid.

7 The Rt. Reverend Monsignor George M. Habig, Vicar General.

8 Dorothea Keplinger, "Study of Failing School Children, with or without Behavior Problems", July, 1937.
from six to fourteen years of age. All children referred were failing school work; some were presenting behavior difficulties. The agency had in its employ a graduate psychologist who contacted the families, talked with parents and teachers, and administered a psychometric examination to each child. The parent or parents of each child were acquainted with the recommendations made by the doctor and the psychologist and were encouraged to use the available facilities to help their children make better emotional, scholastic, or social adjustments as the needs indicated.

Because of the marginal financial planning under the Mothers' Pension program administered through the Juvenile Court, Catholic Community League gave supplementary assistance and casework supervision to children and parents in selected situations.

Aid to Dependent Children, administered under the federal social security legislation of 1935, brought about many changes in the Catholic Community League boarding home program, particularly in the areas of financial support. Aid to Dependent Children replaced the Mothers’ Pension so that supplementary assistance to widows and fatherless families ceased. Aid to Dependent Children existed only for those children living in their own homes or in the homes of relatives. Occasionally, children of homes broken by death, divorce, or imprisonment, were removed from boarding homes and returned to the remaining parent who was now eligible to receive benefits under the Aid to Dependent Children program. Relatives willing to receive a child into their

9 Catholic Community League, Minutes of Board Meeting, January 11, 1939.
home were eligible for public support for the child.

The Aid to Dependent Children program was administered at the community level by the judge of the Juvenile Court who served as a member of the County Board of Public Assistance.

Children placed in relatives' homes by their families were supervised by the Catholic Community League upon request of parents or relatives themselves. If these children were accepted for care, the agency made routine investigations. The homes were not licensed, and the rate of board for the care of these children was determined among the relatives.

Placement of children in institutions, whether state or private, was made upon the recommendation of the Catholic Community League. An investigation was made of family problems which might necessitate the removal of the child from the home. Disciplinary problems usually constituted cause for institutional placement, particularly with adolescents. Since most of the institutions had caseworkers, the agency did not continue sustaining service after admitting the child. There was contact with the family and child after dismissal. Juvenile delinquents who had not come to the attention of the court could be committed to state institutions for study and disciplinary treatment if the agency felt the situation warranted such action. The case situation was brought to the court for hearing and subsequent commitment upon recommendation. Families requesting state placement for partially trained feebleminded children could also be served through court commitment upon agency recommendation. The board rates varied in private institutions.
Families able to support were requested to do so. Where there was lack of funds, support arrangements were made with the director of the institution for payment by the diocese. Public institutions requested that the family provide clothing for the child.10

Foster homes included four distinct kinds of placement planning: adoptive, wage, free, and boarding homes were used. All homes were investigated and certified for license to the Ohio State Department of Public Welfare.

With the development of a distinct child welfare program by the Catholic Community League, in addition to the new emphasis on boarding home care in preference to institutional placement, it became evident that some revision should be initiated concerning a division of service. It was thought that Family Service Society could no longer assume full responsibility for the investigation and licensing of Catholic homes. On February 2, 1929,11 through community planning, a joint licensing committee was created. This committee included representatives from both the Family Service Society and the Catholic Community League. The Catholic agency assumed responsibility for accepting applications from and investigating Catholic families. The results of these investigations were presented to the joint licensing committee by the Family Service Society. The latter agency henceforth served only Protestant children. The Catholic homes which had been in use by the Family Service Society were turned over for

10 Statement of Marjorie S. MacDonald, personal interview.

follow-up study and relicensing with the understanding that the Catholic Community League would make supplementary investigation and continue supervision. Only those families licensed to board children received financial support from the agency for the care of children.

Adoptive placements were considered to be permanent, final decree usually being obtained upon completion of one year of placement under agency supervision.

The wage home usually constituted placement of an adolescent who could assume some responsibility for duties in the foster home in order to earn his board. Since most wage home children were deemed dependent, foster parents were expected to furnish them with spending money in addition to free board. The wage home was investigated and approved to serve adolescents who were well adjusted or presented only minor disciplinary problems.

Families interested in providing free care for children were those whose homes had been licensed to board and who became so much interested in the placed child that they wished to adopt him or to assume full responsibility for the child.

The boarding home was certified for a period of one year.\(^\text{12}\) Boarding home care was considered on both short and longterm bases, but always as a temporary measure. The homes were intended to serve those children whose parents were unable to care for them because of chronic or acute illness,

unemployment, severe marital difficulties, broken homes, and the like. Children of unmarried mothers constituted a large number of the boarding home children.\textsuperscript{13} If the mother was working, she contributed to the support of her child by meeting monthly board payments. Infrequently an understanding family would agree to board both the unmarried mother and her child.

Applications to board children continued to be secured through parish priests. Letters were sent to the pastors of the various parishes to acquaint the priests with the program and to enlist their cooperation in obtaining applications of interested families.

In 1931, publicity was initiated in the diocese concerning the boarding home program.\textsuperscript{14} Local newspapers began to participate in the publicity program which was operated in conjunction with the annual Christmas appeal of the Catholic Community League. The local chapter of the National Council of Catholic Women assisted the agency in its publicity program. The most satisfactory source of homes was the parish appeal since the newspaper publicity was emotionally charged without real interpretation of the grave responsibilities of being foster parents.

The Catholic Community League continued service, planning, and medical care for unmarried mothers by placement in the diocesan maternity home. With the new emphasis on adoptive measures and the changing philosophy concerning the unmarried mother, a girl was given the choice of keeping her baby or

\textsuperscript{13} The Catholic Community League, Annual Report, 1938.

\textsuperscript{14} The Catholic Universe Bulletin, Cleveland, Ohio, December 15, 1931.
surrendering him for adoption. Often the surrender of the child was difficult for the mother since she remained in the maternity home for six months while she cared for her child. A mother wishing to keep her child was offered boarding home care for the baby, particularly where she was not free to return to her own home with the child. If boarding home care was planned, the unmarried mother was encouraged to visit her child and provide support where possible. The girl who wished to make adoptive plans was given an additional six months' period to make her decision. Surrender for adoption was filed in Juvenile Court. Informal hearings were held, and permanent custody was given to the Catholic Community League.

As indicated previously, the majority of adoptive parents who applied at the Catholic Community League were formerly boarding home parents wishing to adopt children already placed in their homes. Since the agency was not incorporated until 1937, families interested in adoption were referred to the director of Cleveland institutions. The Catholic Community League conducted the home investigations and continued follow-up supervision, but the selection of the child was made by the diocesan orphanage caseworker.

In 1936, the Catholic Community League was commissioned by the Probate Court to investigate all Catholic adoptive parents who filed formal petition to adopt children and submit a report to the Probate Court of their findings.

At the request of the Juvenile Court, the Catholic Community

\[15\] The Catholic Community League, Minutes of Board Meeting, February, 1936.

\[16\] Ibid.
League assigned a court caseworker to be present at hearings involving Catholic children. If the child was returned to his own home, the agency assumed responsibility for service to the child and his family. Court commitments to state institutions were made upon placement recommendation by the caseworker. Where temporary responsibility of the child was given to the Catholic Community League, the agency placed the child either in a boarding home or in a private institution, according to the needs of the individual child. Only in cases of very young dependent children did the agency make long term plans. All families referred by the court were accepted for service by the agency.

High school students and teen-agers seeking work possibilities were able to obtain guidance and counseling from the agency. Information regarding religious, recreational, and educational activities was available. Some vocational guidance was given upon request of a school, pastor, or parent.

**Family Welfare Services**

In this decade of the depression, the family service program of the Catholic Community League became more specific (see chart No. 1, page in Appendix). In the three areas of service concentration a single goal was set forth, that of "preservation, protection, and rehabilitation of Catholic life." Family welfare included a broader interpretation than relief giving, budgeting, and counseling. Families who requested help with marital difficulties or who were presenting serious problems were accepted for service. With the

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17 Statement of Grace McGowan, personal interview.

18 The Rt. Reverend Monsignor Albert J. Murphy, from an address made to the Board of the Catholic Community League, March 19, 1939.
increased emphasis on awareness of emotional problems formerly disguised as health, economic, and other difficulties, the Catholic Community League did much to stimulate community consciousness of mental hygiene. In an effort to help families where alcoholism and severe emotional problems were present, the agency enlisted the services and cooperation of the resident psychiatrist at the nearby state hospital.\textsuperscript{19} Services to these emotionally upset people were the joint responsibility of the agency and the psychiatrist.

Indigent families having medical problems were encouraged to attend City Clinic for medication and treatment. Expectant mothers who were not under a doctor’s care were referred to the clinic for prenatal care. Cases of venereal disease were encouraged to obtain treatment.

The large numbers of unemployed during this decade resulted in increased emergency relief-giving. In addition, the Catholic Community League expanded its casework program and conducted investigations of an continued follow-up service in all family problems.

To carry out the local program set up under the Federal Emergency Relief Administration in 1933, the Family Service Society was delegated to act as the major relief-giving agency.\textsuperscript{20} The casework program of the Family Service Society was transferred to the Children’s Bureau since it was felt that voluntary contributions could support the children’s services program but not the family casework program since the latter was not developed well enough to be

\textsuperscript{19} Arthur G. Hyde, M.D., Superintendent of Massillon State Hospital, Massillon, Ohio.

\textsuperscript{20} Statement of Marjorie S. MacDonald, personal interview.
accepted apart from the relief-giving role. The Family Service Society dis-
pensed all federal funds allocated to the county for relief purposes. With
the creation of a work program under the Federal Relief Administration, resi-
dents of Stark County were referred to the local Works Project Administration,
the National Youth Administration, and the Civilian Conservation Corps. A
Community Store was organized to distribute food to families accepted for
service.

The Catholic Community League referred Catholic applicants to the
central relief-giving agency. In order to help meet the problems involved in
intake at the relief agency, the Catholic Community League gave some marginal
temporary relief until benefits were assured under the emergency program.
Employable applicants were referred directly to the work programs and for pri-
ivate employment. Those deemed unemployable were sent to the relief agency.
The Catholic Community League also worked with clients and other agencies until
benefits were secured.

With the introduction of the social security legislation of 1935 and
its subsequent program, the State of Ohio organized a Division of Public
Assistance to be administered by the Ohio State Department of Public Welfare.
The creation of the tax-supported agency to administer the program constituted
a radical change in the function and policy of the private welfare agency, the
major problem being division of services. The local Federal Emergency Relief
Administration office was merged into the Stark County Relief Administration,
which served the residents of both Canton and all Stark County. The Family
Service Society returned to its former role of a private welfare agency.
Some cases involving dependent children, old age assistance, and blind persons were transferred to the county relief office when there was reasonable assurance of their eligibility for public assistance.

In 1939 the Stark County Relief Administration was divided, and residents of the city of Canton became eligible for city relief with the creation of the Canton City Relief Administration.

Thus the caseload of the Catholic Community League diminished considerably, and better and more specific services in family welfare were indicated.

It was through this expansion of services to families that the Catholic Community League undertook the problem of community housing for study and survey.21 Many Catholic families were living in dwellings that were non-compliant with health and decency standards. Since the survey indicated poor housing was prevalent, the problem was presented to the Canton Welfare Federation for further study. Upon investigation, it was found that landlords were financially unable to meet the costs of repairing and building. Since no positive planning could be done at the community level, the Catholic Community League appealed to Catholic landlords to reduce rent rates, particularly in the case of indigent families. This plan was only partially successful because of the highly competitive element among real estate dealers. Some landlords were agreeable to a plan of furnishing materials for redecorating if the tenants would do the work.

Health Services

With the re-emphasis on public health throughout the country, the Canton Deanery introduced a school health program into the parochial schools in Canton. The program was administered by the Catholic Community League22 (see chart No. 2, page 21, in Appendix). A registered nurse was retained as a full-time staff member to visit weekly at each school. The salary was paid by the Catholic Community League. A Catholic physician was appointed to serve part-time for a two-year period as the parochial school doctor.

During epidemics of contagious diseases, children were given physical examinations. If any symptoms were present, they were reported to the City Board of Health. The school nurse assisted the doctor in examining all children in the parochial school system. Immunization and tuberculin tests were given throughout the schools. The nurse interpreted these programs to the parents of the school children. The school nurse kept yearly reports on all children enrolled in the schools. Records were kept of weight, height, and any defects. Children were given yearly ear, eye, and throat examinations. Teachers' reports which indicated any auditory or visual retardation were investigated by the nurse. Families were contacted and requested to seek medical care for their children. Indigent families were referred to the city physician. The nurse aided the teacher in taking a health inventory of individual pupils and acted as advisor to the teacher in integrating health with classroom programs. She made home visits where individual situations needed special

22 The Catholic Community League, Minutes of Board Meeting, February 1952.
help or interpretation. The health record of each child was kept as a permanent part of his academic record.

For those children who were under nourished, underweight, or suffering from slight malnutrition, the Catholic Community League authorized a milk fund in the schools and met the cost of the program.

The Catholic Community League instituted a health program for children under foster care.\textsuperscript{23} Children accepted for placement were given complete physical and psychological examinations. Arrangements were made for treatment of medical and dental problems. Medical reports and results of psychometric examinations became a permanent part of the case record. Only those children committed to state institutions were not included in this program since the state program of health was most adequate.

\textbf{Dioecesan Affiliation}

Through the efforts of the National Catholic Welfare Council, a National Conference of Catholic Charities was founded for the purpose of integrating services in Catholic welfare agencies throughout the country and unifying the administration of Catholic social work.

The Diocese of Cleveland, Ohio,\textsuperscript{24} was one of the first dioceses in the United States to correlate Catholic social services into the agency setting and oversee a diocesan charities program.

\textsuperscript{23} Anna M. Schneider, "History of Homefinding Department of the Catholic Community League from 1919 to 1937", August 4, 1937.

\textsuperscript{24} John O'Grady, Ph.D., LL.D.; Catholic Charities in the United States, History and Problems, National Conference of Catholic Charities; Washington, D.C., 1931.
Although the Catholic Community League worked in close cooperation with the director of Cleveland Diocesan institutions and was responsible to the Bishop, there was little joint planning in a unified diocesan program prior to 1939.

In 1939 the Catholic Charities Bureau was organized as the central administration office for the Cleveland Diocese. District offices, such as the Catholic Community League, located within the various cities in the diocese, were responsible to the central office (see chart No. 3, page , in Appendix).

Under this new organization all applications for admittance to Cleveland institutions were made through the Catholic Charities Bureau, Cleveland, Ohio. It administered and maintained all admittance procedures and included all institutions except the diocesan maternity home for unmarried mothers. The maternity home maintained its own social service department and accepted applications on an independent basis.

Incorporation and Licensing

On March 15, 1937, the Catholic Community League was legally incorporated under Ohio statutes.25 Immediately following this, the agency made application with the Ohio State Department of Public Welfare to become a certified welfare agency. License was granted this same year, and the Catholic Community League became an independent licensing and adoptive agency.

25 The Catholic Community League, Minutes of Board Meeting, March, 1937.
With the incorporation and certification of the agency, the Catholic Community League became eligible for endorsement by national welfare organisations. The Catholic Community League was a member of the National Conference of Catholic Charities, the National Catholic Welfare Council, the National Conference of Social Work, the American Association of Social Work, and the Child Welfare League of America. Participation in the diocesan Catholic Charities program followed upon membership in the diocesan Charities Corporation.

Agency Personnel

The Board of the Catholic Community League continued to function in an advisory capacity to the executive secretary and staff in the administration of agency services. In keeping with the expanding program, more direct cooperation was initiated with the Cleveland Catholic Charities Bureau. As new areas of service opened within the agency, additional staff was secured to administer the program. Only professionally trained, experienced caseworkers were hired. By 1935 staff personnel consisted of the executive secretary, the casework supervisor, two children's caseworkers, a homefinder, one family caseworker, the parochial school nurse, and two clerical workers. Staff meetings replaced the Board conferences in planning for families. With the increase in staff, personnel practices were set up and approved by the Board. Staff members were hired upon approval of qualifications by the Board. Salaries were commensurate with training and experience.

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26 The Catholic Community League, Minutes of Board Meeting, February, 1937.
Finance

In this decade, the Catholic Community League, through membership in the Canton Welfare Federation, continued to receive the major portion of its income from the Community Fund. The Diocese of Cleveland furnished partial funds to cover the board costs of children placed in Catholic institutions. With the revision of the county program, additional funds were allocated by Stark County for board payment of dependent children. The annual membership appeal continued to provide funds for Christmas giving. Gifts and bequests from interested friends also constituted a portion of funds for operating expense.

In 1935, through the generosity of financially prominent Catholics, the Catholic Community League was able to purchase its present offices.27

Related Studies

In 1939 the Canton Welfare Federation and affiliated agencies agreed that a survey should be conducted to evaluate the standard of their service to the community. The director of the School of Social Administration of Ohio State University28 was invited to Canton for the purpose of conducting a survey of member agencies. In addition, the survey was to serve as a basis for budget revision of Community Chest funds.

Regarding the Catholic Community League, a Welfare Federation

27 The Catholic Community League, Minutes of Board Meeting, February 1935.

affiliated agency, this survey included a review of fourteen case records in order to determine sources of referral, to evaluate the casework standards of the agency, its use of community resources, and its recording techniques, and to compare professional services rendered with respect to funds expended. The findings of the survey were that the professional standards of the agency were excellent and that the agency had a well integrated place in the community.

**Summarization**

In this chapter, the writer has presented the continued growth and development of the agency during the economic upheaval of the depression years. The Catholic Community League gained recognition and developed and expanded its services in response to community need. It has carried out its conviction that those needs should be met by providing best possible service.

It can be seen that during this ten-year period, the Catholic Community League, as a private welfare agency, became an instrument of the community which it served.
CHAPTER IV
THE THIRD DECADE 1939-1949

The casework program of the Catholic Community League continued to be undifferentiated during the 1939 to 1950 decade. The major emphasis of the casework program constituted child welfare services which included the following: care for neglected and dependent children; foster home placement; services to emotionally deprived, disturbed, and handicapped children; medical planning and casework to unmarried mothers and their children; protective care; student and vocational counseling; adoptive study and placement; institutional placements; and health services to all children under agency care.

Family welfare services assumed wider scope during this decade. These included a variety of problems surrounding the family and the home: consultation and remedial planning in the areas of marital and familial relationships; handling situations requiring legal aid; housing problems; health and medical planning; homemaking and budgeting; counseling and guidance; referral service; and services related to the aged, the handicapped, and the indigent.

Health services included arranging medical and dental care for all children under agency care, complete physical and psychological examinations for children placed in institutions and foster homes, and the parochial school health program.

Because of the large scale migration to the Canton area for work in
war industries and the general unrest among people with the threat of world
war, the Catholic Community League received a large volume of out-of-town
inquiries from families, relatives, and agencies for visits, investigations
and other reports. Because of the time consuming element involved in this
type of inquiry, another division of service, that of "Incidental Services"\(^1\)
was initiated within the agency. These services included: (1) supplementary
relief to meet inadequacies of public relief or family income when such was
indicated as a part of the integral casework planning; (2) providing religious
articles, school books, and clothing for children under foster home care;
(3) informational service of employment and recreational activities; (4) in-
vestigations and service to out-of-town agencies.

Throughout this decade, the status of the administration of the
agency remained the same. The Catholic Community League was faced with
specific problems relating to staff, i.e., vacancies and inability to locate
trained replacements; demands for service encountered in intake were of a
greater variety and for services which the agency was not geared to provide
such as applications for foster home day care, housing for migrant workers
upon arrival in Canton and the like, and the resultant need for additional
funds to meet the cost of these emergency services. The Catholic Community
League participated in the Community Chest by virtue of its affiliation with
the Canton Welfare Federation. Gifts of private benefactors and funds re-
ceived through the annual membership appeal continued to supplement the

\(^1\) Catholic Community League, Minutes of Board Meeting, January 20, 1943.
financial support of the agency. A major change occurred in agency financing and it was at the diocesan level.

In 1943 the Cleveland Diocese was divided. Canton was included in the newly created Diocese of Youngstown.² The Catholic Community League continued to work closely with Cleveland Catholic Charities,³ the agency was responsible to the Bishop of the Youngstown Diocese.⁴ In 1944 a Diocesan Catholic Charities Corporation was created with central offices located in Youngstown. With the newly created Charities Corporation, many changes were brought about with respect to the Catholic Community League, especially in its foster care program. Long time dependent children in boarding homes under the supervision of the Catholic Community League were no longer transferred to the Stark County Child Welfare Department for reasons of financial expediency. The diocese recommended that these children continue to be supervised by the Catholic Community League, with the diocese allocating funds for their support. Since the Youngstown Diocese had no institutions, the Catholic Community League continued to use Cleveland institutions and was permitted to use those in surrounding dioceses. All support for dependent children was assumed by the diocese.

Recognition of public responsibility and the subsequent revision of the Ohio Juvenile Court Code in 1940⁵ brought about a new policy in the

² Established July 22, 1943.
³ Catholic Community League used Cleveland institutional facilities since Youngstown had none.
⁴ Bishop James A. McFadden and Coadjutor Bishop Emmet M. Walsh.
⁵ State of Ohio, Juvenile Court Code, 1947.
administration of the Juvenile Court program. Caseworkers from private agencies no longer participated in the Court hearings and follow-up casework service to children and families. Through appropriation of public funds, the Juvenile Court was able to institute an in-training program for probation officers. This not only relieved the caseworkers in the private agencies but brought about a more unified Court program. The private agency continued to assist the Court in cases involving families of children where marital counseling, temporary financial assistance, and budget planning were indicated as cause for estranged family relationships. Delinquency cases were handled only by the Court and by probation officers. Severe behavior problems were referred for agency service at the discretion of the Court.

**Catholic Child Immigration**

In 1939 when the war was beginning to disrupt family life to a serious degree in Europe, the United States government sought to unite with European allies to alleviate some of their strain and oppression by cooperative planning. Church and philanthropic organizations helped shoulder the responsibility for sending provisions to the oppressed countries of Europe. Many private organizations in America began to plan for the care of European children who were in danger and whose families wished to send their children to America for the war interim. The United States Committee for the Care of European Children was organized under the auspices of the Children's Bureau of the United States Department of Labor. The Children's Bureau designated certain private child care agencies throughout the country to work jointly in the interests of these children.
In 1940, Europe's war brought to America a group of refugee children. Some of the first children to land in the United States were the children of the British staff of the Hoover Vacuum Cleaner Company of North Canton, Ohio. The exodus, arranged by Mr. Herbert W. Hoover, president of the public relations department of the company, involved eighty-four children. These were children of Hoover plant employees in England. Through the United States Committee for the Care of European Children, the Catholic Community League, as one of the local agencies, was authorized to serve as a reviewing and supervising agency for the care of these refugee children of the Catholic faith. The Catholic Community League received further authorization from the United States Department of Labor, Children's Bureau, as a designated agency adequately equipped to cooperate in the investigation and certification of foster homes and in the care and supervision of the children who were subsequently placed in these homes.

Some of these children have remained in America and continue to live with their respective foster families. Those who were orphaned by the War were adopted by their American foster parents. Still others returned to England and their families at the end of the War.

Emergency Needs Resultant from World War II

Along with the general unrest many problems were brought about by the wartime induction into the armed services. Because of the effect of mobilization on the national level and the boom in Canton industry and

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6 Mary Jane Pawmier, "Professional Aspects of the Care of English Children", a report to the National Council of Catholic Women, Canton, Ohio, October 8, 1940.
production, migration to Canton created a lowering of standards in many areas such as: housing, health, and morality. There was a noticeable decrease in medical facilities available to civilians so that agencies were called upon to help meet health needs by referral service to clinics, hospitals, and private physicians.

Unmarried motherhood increased alarmingly and constituted a major portion of caseloads at the Catholic Community League. During the war era the term "unmarried mother" included not only the single girl but also the married woman whose child was conceived out of wedlock. Many girls left their homes to come to Canton from surrounding towns to work in war industries. Thus they became independent and were free from parental authority and adult supervision. There was little to offer in the way of recreational outlets, and new friends were not easily made. Young men entering the armed forces disrupted the natural relationships existing between men and women. Young women, because of the economic unrest and general insecurity of the future, were misled in their eagerness to help servicemen. The agency encountered additional problems in its efforts to help unmarried mothers because so many of them were non-residents. It necessitated a program of more comprehensive planning and responsibility for the mother and the baby because these men and girls were not part of any family group.

With the war crises and its emotional effects upon families, the

intake of the Catholic Community League necessarily broadened. Service was requested for the young family whose husband and father had been called to military service. In some cases it was necessary for the mother to return to work and arrangements had to be made for her children. Married women suffered acute anxiety and loneliness of separation and many turned to the agency for help.

Budgeting and financial planning took on new emphasis where the income of families decreased. In other families the sudden increase made for free spending and consequent poor handling of funds. Many wives and mothers of service men needing help in adjusting their expenses to the amount of allotments and government allowances. In families whose income was marginal the Catholic Community League was able to supplement financially.9

Counseling services were available to families of service men and women who were unable to make the emotional adjustment of losing family members. Job opportunities and recreational facilities were suggested to help bridge the gap. Chronic illness and sudden deaths in Catholic families fostered close cooperation with the Canton Chapter of the American Red Cross. The agency accepted referrals from Red Cross where deaths and casualties in Catholic families brought about the need for casework services.

To help meet some of the emergency problems arising in the child

8 Catholic Community League, Minutes of Board Meeting, July 29, 1943.

9 Catholic Community League, Minutes of Board Meeting, February 24, 1943.
welfare field during the war, the Catholic Community League participated locally in many of the newly authorized welfare programs set forth on a nation-wide level. These included: 1) homemaker service in families; 2) the establishment of a subsidized baby-home for children under one year of age; 3) a group home for school age children from six to fourteen years of age; and 4) investigation and licensing of day nurseries for children of working mothers.

Because of the numerous increase in child-placement applications and the scarcity of available foster homes, a plan for homemaker service was considered. Wherever possible an effort was made to maintain home ties and stability for the child during a family crisis such as illness or temporary absence of a parent. The philosophy of providing a mother-substitute afforded not only an unbroken routine but provided emotional security for the child and preserved family strength. The Catholic Community League was able to secure a few Catholic women for a homemaker service program, but the plan was limited by the scarcity of adequate personnel. Prior to placement of the homemaker a comprehensive study of the family situation was made and interpreted to the homemaker before her introduction to the family. Wherever casework service was indicated, the agency followed up with supervision in close cooperation with the homemaker. The homemaker was given an orientation with respect to her duties and responsibilities. The Catholic Community League

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10 Catholic Community League, Minutes of Board Meeting, October 21, 1944.
maintained supervision of the children in the home and assisted in interpreting the program to the family members, with particular emphasis on the adjustment of the children. This included budgeting, meal planning, health measures, cooperation with the schools and teachers, behavior problems, and general maladjustments in the family. The agency retained these homemakers on a monthly basis. The homemaker was kept on the agency payroll with the agency setting the wage. The cost of this service was met by the family. Where the family was unable to meet the full cost of the service, the agency underwrote supplementation.

As was indicated previously, the Catholic Community League was faced with the problem of large numbers of children of unmarried mothers needing temporary placement. In addition, many young married women whose husbands were in service were asking for foster home care for their children so that they could take employment in war industries. It was impossible to find a sufficient number of foster homes. Because of the lack of other facilities for the care of children under the age of one year, Catholic Community League established a subsidized special baby-home on June 1, 1944.11 This home was to accommodate a minimum of six children under one year of age. The home was investigated and certified with the agency guaranteeing a flat monthly rate for the care of the six children, with additional payment for each child over the minimum number. The agency set-up a corresponding medical program for

11 Catholic Community League, Minutes of Board Meeting, June 21, 1944.
these children. The agency reserved the right to place a child in the home and to remove a child from the home without submitting the situation to the foster parents for approval. Visiting regulations were agreed upon between the agency and the boarding parents with respect to the convenience of individual schedules of parents. Upon agreement between the agency and the foster parents a distinct plan was initiated regarding provisions for these children. The agency was to provide the following: medical care and nursing supervision, medical supplies, clothing, beds, play equipment, emergency transportation, psychometric examinations and psychiatric consultations. The foster parents agreed to provide: a nursery isolation room, bedding, physical care, household help, and developmental records.

This home continued to care for many of the children placed there early in the war years. As parents were able to resume normal living in the family group, these children were returned to their own homes. Those children of unmarried mothers who were placed for adoption remained in the home until plans could be made for them. In 1949 the Catholic Community discontinued the subsidized group baby-home.12

In direct relation to the plan for the subsidized baby-home, the agency also initiated a group home project for children of school age from six to fourteen years of age.13 This home was set up as a temporary measure

12 Catholic Community League, Minutes of Board Meeting, December 17, 1946.

13 Catholic Community League, Minutes of Board Meeting, April 21, 1942.
to meet emergency problems arising in Catholic families during the war. The home was licensed to board a maximum of nine children. Through careful study and evaluation, a child presenting any severe behavior problems was not placed in the group home. Only those well-adjusted children who seemed to be adaptable to group living were considered for placement. During the post war era, the group home continued to function, but placement emphasis changed from temporary to long term bases. Catholic children for whom no adoptive plan could be made, and totally dependent children were placed in accordance with the need for long time care. Only those children having normal intelligence and capacities were considered for placement in this home.

Canton had no provision for the care of children of working mothers since its only day nursery had closed during the depression. Efforts to organize a group day care plan on a local level with public and private financing were unsuccessful until 1945 when the Canton Board of Education obtained federal funds through the Lanham Act to establish two day care centers. During the early years of the war, therefore, the social agencies carried a large share of the burden of planning for children of working mothers. Foster day care plans \(^\text{14}\) were developed and the Catholic Community League actively participated in this plan, offering service to mothers who needed to work to supplement the family income. Homes were investigated and approved by the agency for a period of one year. Day care homes provided

\(^\text{14}\) Catholic Community League, Minutes of Board Meeting, October 21, 1942.
individualized care for children under school age. The agency continued some supervision and assumed responsibility for the referral of working mothers to licensed families. The Catholic Community League made periodic follow-up investigations and handled payments for nursery care, with the mother reimbursing the agency. The mother assumed responsibility for her child and for its daily transportation to and from the nursery home. Day nursery care was discontinued as an agency project in 1947 when the war industries returned to normal output and when service men returned to their families.

Because of the increase in volume of intake, case situations were differentiated for major and minor service. Minor service did not necessarily mean only casual and unimportant contacts, but signified satisfactory planning, understanding, and adjustment as a result of the initial interview. Major service meant handling situations which required long term planning or where casework treatment and study were indicated.

By 1944 the staff of the Catholic Community League had been reduced considerably by the call for professionally trained social workers by the various service organizations.15 It was at this time that the agency was obliged to consider a plan whereby non-professional staff could be acquired and given rudimentary training. These non-trained staff personnel were referred to as case-aides.16 The case-aide assisted the regular caseworker

15 Catholic Community League, Minutes of Board Meeting, September 9, 1944.

16 Ibid.
with routine calls such as medical care for foster children, planning for families, housing and referral for employment and other non-casework problems. In this way the caseworker was relieved of routine handling of clients and was free to give full time to the more serious problems requiring service.

To help social agencies meet staff shortages and facilitate an adequate orientation program for case-aides, the School of Applied Social Science of Western Reserve University at Cleveland offered a few courses in elementary social work to staff workers.

In direct relation to personnel planning within the agency to meet staff shortages, the Board of the Catholic Community League endorsed an in-training program\(^\text{17}\) which would service a two-fold purpose. Catholic Community League was accepted by the accredited schools of Social Work in Ohio\(^\text{18}\) as an authorized agency to give supervision to field work students. Block field work assignments consisted of a six-month period during which time the student worked at the agency under the supervision of the Catholic Community League. In this way, both the agency and school profited not only in the area of immediate staff needs, but also by the university associations and current welfare developments in the field of Social Work.

Despite staff depletion, agency personnel was active in many wartime organizations where the services of professional social workers were helpful to civilian and governmental projects. Individual staff members cooperated

\(^{17}\) Ibid.

\(^{18}\) Catholic Community League, Minutes of Board Meeting, May 17, 1944.
with local draft boards as medical field agents; they were alerted and trained in all areas of civilian defense and American Red Cross disaster operations. They also participated in the United Service Organization projects in the Canton area.

Post-War Planning in the Agency

With the cessation of hostilities abroad, the United States began the slow return to peace-time living. The private social agency particularly evidenced what would seem to have been a hasty return to normal living. Families were reunited, the father in service returned home, mothers no longer worked, the number of unmarried mothers decreased, and the demand for foster home care lessened. The Catholic Community League’s intake and volume of service became proportionate to pre-war capacity. Only those services which proved satisfactory on a non-emergency basis remained as a part of the program. The Board of the agency voted to discontinue the large scale plan for homemaker services, but retained the homemaker program per se.

The subsidized foster home continued to function in the post-war era as a study home for pre-adoptive children. The group home for school-age children through fourteen years of age also continued to care for those children who were orphaned or totally dependent, and were not eligible for adoption. The Canton day nursery program for working mothers was discontinued on the local level, and the Catholic Community League discontinued supervision

and certification of its nursery homes as soon as suitable arrangements were made for children whose mothers continued to work.

In conjunction with post-war planning within the agency, the Catholic Community League was fortunate to receive a bequest of $25,000.00 "to be used for purposes of public charity", 20 from a wealthy Catholic woman who had previously been a member of the agency board.

Although many of the families who had moved to Canton during the war returned to their respective communities, a large proportion of this group remained in the city. As a result of the returning serviceman who was to establish his family outside the home of relatives faced many hardships in obtaining adequate housing. Many families were required to accept sub-standard housing if they wished to remain in the city. Landlords became more restrictive; few would rent to families with children. Along with the general rise in prices occurring after the war, real estate soared so high that only a few families were able to purchase homes. Ex-servicemen who had rented their houses during the war years were returning with their families so that tenants were required to move elsewhere. Because of the shortage of adequate houses for rent, the Catholic Community League invested in a housing project 21 the sum of $5000.00 in order to enable a number of low income families to purchase homes. Through cooperative work with the Canton Real Estate Board

20 Catholic Community League, Minutes of Board Meeting, September 18, 1947.

21 Catholic Community League, Minutes of Board Meeting, June 24, 1948.
a number of houses for sale were located. The agency approved the purchase and provided the initial payment which could not exceed $500.00. The family was to carry the monthly payments on a land contract basis and pay back to the agency the five hundred dollar loan as rapidly as they were able according to their individual family budget. In this way the agency was able to initiate a revolving fund to help secure adequate housing for additional families.

Following the war one of the greatest problems facing the United States was the refugee population from Europe seeking entry into the United States. The Displaced Persons Act of 1948 and the formulation of its subsequent committees and organizations brought about the need for provisional planning on the local level. The Catholic Community League cooperated as a representative office of the National Catholic War Relief Services which in turn was affiliated with the International Refugee Organization. The agency conducted investigations in families who wished to sponsor a refugee relative, or friend as a displaced person. Legal counsel was retained by the agency to assist in interpreting to interested families the legal aspects of sponsoring displaced persons. The Catholic Community League did not act as sponsor but planned with families who were anticipating the arrival of friends or relatives.

In order to plan effectively for displaced persons, the Catholic Community League maintained contact with families, employers, and the refugees themselves until such time as an adequate adjustment could be made. The agency

22 Statement of Marjorie S. MacDonald, personal interview.
encouraged patrons to assist refugees with language barriers and other common difficulties encountered in adjusting to community living in America.

On January 24, 1946, at the close of the war, the Board of the agency voted to discontinue the case aide service and in turn initiated a scholarship program\(^{23}\) whereby the agency would eventually acquire trained staff. Untrained staff members were given educational leave. These prospective students were considered to have potential qualities which would make them an asset to the staff when they returned to the agency following completion of their education in a recognized school of social work. By agreement with the agency the student obtained funds on a monthly basis to cover tuition and maintenance costs for a two-year period, during which time the student attended an accredited school of social work. Upon completion of professional training the student was under contract to return to the agency to work for a two-year period.

The Catholic Community League has sponsored three such scholarships: 1) In 1946 to the School of Applied Social Sciences at Western Reserve University, Cleveland, Ohio; 2) In 1947 to Fordham University School of Social Service, New York City and 3) In 1949 to the School of Social Work, Loyola University, Chicago.

**Catholic Community League's Stake in Community Planning**

On June 24, 1946, the Social Planning Council of the Canton Area was organized under the auspices of the Canton Welfare Federation to promote cooperation among civic and welfare groups. Membership consists of both tax-
supported and private agencies, as well as lay individuals interested in the field of social work. There are four divisions or areas of classification with each agency grouped according to the type of service it renders. These divisions consist of: 1) Family and Child Welfare, 2) Group Work and Recreation, 3) Health and Hospital and 4) Civic and Education. The Catholic Community League was active in the organisation of the Social Planning Council and has worked in close cooperation with the Council in many areas of casework service.

In direct relation to planning at the community level, The Catholic Community League was instrumental in formulating and underwriting the financial cost of a recreational program for the aged.\(^\text{24}\) This consisted of weekly meetings with educational and recreational outlets for persons of sixty-five years of age and over. As the Golden Age Club grew and public interest was aroused, the responsibility for the club was turned over to volunteer organisations under the supervision of the Social Planning Council.

The Stark County Mental Hygiene Society was another organisation created through the efforts of the Social Planning Council. In turn, a Mental Hygiene Clinic\(^\text{25}\) was opened in accordance with provisions of the National Mental Health Act. It serves the residents of Canton and Stark County. The Catholic Community League worked in close cooperation with the Mental Health

\(^\text{24}\) Catholic Community League, Minutes of Board Meeting, January 22, 1948.

\(^\text{25}\) Catholic Community League, Minutes of Board Meeting, November 20, 1947.
Society, the chairman of the society being a member of the board of the agency.

Through the newly established clinic, the casework agencies of the city were able to refer all prospective adoptive children as well as disturbed and retarded adults and children for psychological and psychiatric study and treatment.

The Social Planning Council has been active in promoting effective publicity of agency programs and has done much to stimulate public interest in and acceptance of casework services. Through the work and efforts of the Council opportunities have been provided for social agencies to evaluate realistically their services in relation to needs of the community. Much of the work which this organisation has accomplished has had a direct bearing on the services of the Catholic Community League. Such projects as publicity of adoption procedures and practices has brought about a better understanding of the agency role in adoptive planning. While the Catholic Community League continued to conduct social investigations for the Probate Court on all independent adoptions involving Catholic children, it became evident that an increasing number of children were being placed for adoption independent of agency placements. These were made by the mothers themselves, doctors, attorneys and friends. Upon investigation the same condition was found to exist in other agencies. Cooperative planning with the Juvenile Court, the child care agencies, and the Social Planning Council, brought adoptions, its

26 Doctor John D. O'Brien, M.D.
procedures, practices, and legal aspects into community focus. The Adoption Committee of the Social Planning Council did much to bring about cooperation between agencies and physicians, lawyers, and other persons who placed children for adoption independently. From the findings of the adoption committee it was found necessary to study further the problems of the unmarried mother who was unknown to the agency. It was revealed that many unmarried mothers were unable to meet the cost of confinement care and were consequently placing their babies for adoption with families who were willing to pay the hospital and doctor bills. In order to assist the unmarried mother with a more adequate kind of planning and to encourage her to use agency facilities, the committee sought to relieve her of the heavy financial burden by recommending that the agencies underwrite supplementation for the cost of medical care. Although the problems existed in both the public and private agencies, the cost of this kind of care was difficult to determine, so that no adequate planning could be made which applied to all agencies. Each agency was obliged to work out a plan of payment for unmarried mothers unable to meet the cost of care.

It was at this time that the Youngstown Diocesan Catholic Charities Corporation agreed to finance medical care in any Catholic Maternity Home for unmarried mothers who were residents of the Diocese.27

Summary
At the close of 1949, the major program of the Catholic Community League remained unchanged as far as the general scope of services was

27 Catholic Community League, Minutes of Board Meeting, April 23, 1949.

The Catholic Community League made a comfortable adjustment during this decade. Because of the flexibility of policy and the additional funds to meet emergency situations, the agency was able to function adequately despite such handicaps as staff depletion and heavy caseloads.
CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

General Summary

This study was undertaken to present in writing a chronological history of the Catholic Community League of Canton, Incorporated. The purpose of the study was to indicate the growth of the agency from a volunteer group engaged in recreational work and religious instruction to a casework agency servicing families and children. The Catholic Community League was created in 1919 to serve the Catholic population of the city of Canton and Stark County. The agency is the district office of the Youngstown Diocese Catholic Charities Corporation. It was organized by and continues to be directed by lay personnel who assume full responsibility for carrying out its policy and function.

Conclusions:

In tracing the history of the agency, this study has indicated the progressiveness of the community in respect to private welfare. The Catholic Community League, as a private welfare agency, has survived and progressed in function and service to the community. The presentation of historical data presented in this study has shown that the agency has fulfilled the need for which it was created and that it has found its place in the private welfare field.
Community acceptance of the agency has been evidenced by the ability of the agency to formulate a sound program of service. Through the keen foresight of the Board members, the agency was able to expand its program to meet changing needs. By the hiring of professionally trained personnel, the Catholic Community League has been able to offer and maintain a high calibre of service to the individual and the community.

Interested Catholic people in the community have generously assisted the agency throughout its existence. The Board has consisted of community-conscious citizens who have been willing to give time and financial assistance to the fulfillment of every policy so that the agency was able to function to capacity.

By virtue of the sound financial backing the agency has received through the years, it has been able to purchase and maintain its own offices.

By the development of a casework program, administered through the social-minded board and a professionally trained staff, the Catholic Community League has been able to be far reaching in its goals and objectives.

The primary objective of the Catholic Community League in the administration and carrying out of its program of service to families and children is to assist in the maintenance and preservation of family life. The Catholic approach in casework and therapy is a part of the inherent quality which permeates the Catholic Community League.

It can be concluded from this study that the types of problems handled by the agency indicate that there has been a close correlation between the community needs and the services provided to meet them.
Aside from the casework program administered by the agency, the Catholic Community League has taken much initiative in remedial planning and in the building-up of community morals. The housing survey, the foster home program, child health services, and the recreational planning for the aged have constituted forward steps for the community.

It has been evidenced that the Board and staff of the Catholic Community League have been interested, aware and ready to assume responsibility for providing and maintaining a high standard of service. A friendly and cooperative relationship has existed between the Catholic Community League and other agencies in the community.

Through perusal of the Catholic Community League Annual Reports, it can be seen that the agency has been used as a community resource. Aside from direct personal applications for service, there are many sources of referral. Among the most prominent are priests, schools, hospitals, doctors, attorneys, the Juvenile Court, Probate Court, The Court of Domestic Relations, the Canton City Police, and all other public and private agencies in the city of Canton and Stark County.

The affiliations of the Catholic Community League on a national, state and local basis, with its endorsements as a child placing, adoptive placing and licensing agency bespeak the recognition the agency has received.

Worthy of repetition is the evaluation of the Catholic Community League made by an outstanding leader in the field of Catholic social welfare in America: The Right Reverend Monsignor John O'Grady, Executive Director of the National Conference of Catholic Charities, Washington, D.C., has compli-
mented the Catholic Community on its organisation and program and has stated that "the Catholic Community League is considered one of the best Catholic social service agencies in the country".¹

¹ Catholic Community League, Minutes of Board Meeting, September 12, 1942.
APPENDIX
Chart of Casework Services No. 1
Chart of School Health Program No. 2

School Physician

Tests and Immunizations

Physical Examinations

School Nurse

Home Visits

Weighing and Measuring

Eye and Ear Tests

School Clinic Checkups
Organisational Chart of the Catholic Community League No. 3

Bishop

Diocesan Director

Board Members

Executive Secretary

Office Secretary

Nurse

Supervisor

Clerical Staff

Professional Staff
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Mr. Glover B. Cottrell, president of the Canton Welfare Federation.
Monsignor George N. Habig, V.O., spiritual advisor to the Catholic Community League Board.

Marjorie S. MacDonald, Executive Secretary of the Catholic Community League.

Grace W. McGowan, retired Executive Secretary, (January 1950).
Mr. Donald E. Williams, president of the Board, 1949, 1950.

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