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The Legendary Musketeer Documents

The Legendary Musketeer (2015)

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He Named the Musketeer - A Memorial

Xavier University - Cincinnati

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HE NAMED THE MUSKETEERS

A MEMORIAL



FATHER FRANCIS J. FINN, S.J.

THE beloved Jesuit who named the Musketeers is dead twenty-five years. Many Cincinnatians remember how all our citizens mourned the passing of Father Francis J. Finn, S.J., on November 2nd, 1928. He had labored here as director of the St. Xavier Free Parish School for 30 years. Father Finn has many monuments to his memory. When he died, eulogies came from the prominent and the lowly, from Catholic, Protestant and Jew, because he was the friend of all. While the children of the "bottoms" district were his special love and concern, the businessmen of the entire downtown area greeted him in his daily rounds. Father Finn set up the first free parish school at St. Xavier's in 1898 and his idea spread so that today it is the accepted procedure in every parish school in the land. His free school was the typical American "melting-pot" and the children of immigrant parents of 21 nationalities appear on its aging register. Father Finn spoke out for the Community Chest idea when that movement was new and he encouraged even the children of his school to give their pennies. He is best known, of course, for the stories he wrote for young men.

These have been translated into many languages. Father Finn's close friends were among those who helped build Xavier University's new campus in the 1920s. Then he crowned his work for the University by naming the athletic teams "The Musketeers" and suggesting the Legion of Honor for the recognition of those young men who exemplify exceptional character, sportsmanship and ability on the playing field.

In a tribute to Father Finn, the poet Harrison Conrard, Xavier, '92, wrote:

... And of the great was he,
Giving and serving,
Who led his hosts of youth
With love unswerving.
Ranks break, the old will pass,
New ranks succeed them;
Still will his hosts march on,
Still will he lead them—
Lifting the loads they bear,
Soothing their sorrow—
On up from Man's today,
Into God's tomorrow.