



Foundations

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St. Joseph's Hospital Little Current, Ontario

by Greg J. Humbert

LITTLE CURRENT

Little Current is on the North Shore of Manitoulin Island within Lake Huron and close to Georgian Bay, the largest island in a freshwater lake in the world. The site of the town of Little Current has been called many names over the years. The indigenous Anishinaabe Nation called the place *Wewebjiwang*, meaning “where the waters flow back and forth.” The French voyageurs named it *Le Petit Courant*. Over time it was referred to as *Dingwall* by the post office (though the name was never official) and *Shaftesbury* by the surveyor T.J. Patten, who laid out the town site. However, since the 1860s the town at the North Channel’s northwest point, where the current slows or reverses, became known as Little Current. Originally the town was settled by the indigenous Anishinaabe Nation who, as entrepreneurs, took advantage of the natural harbour. They were joined by non-native settlers shortly after.¹



THE HOUSE THAT BECAME A HOSPITAL

Thomas C. Sims was a local entrepreneur who elected the first mayor of Little Current in April 1890. Along with his brother Charles, they were known as “captains of industry” in Little Current. Together the Sims brothers operated a large general store. They also purchased the lucrative timber rights near Whitefish Falls and operated them for some years, supplying all necessary supplies from the General Store, and using their own tugs to transport supplies to the camps.

They were both sons of the Rev. Jabez Walters Sims, the first Anglican priest in the area who initiated services in 1864. Rev. Sims was stationed in Sheguiandah on Manitoulin Island and would celebrate regular biweekly services in Little Current when the weather permitted.² He and his wife had five sons: Henry, Fred, John, Thomas, and Charles. Sadly, the Rev. Jabez Walters Sims drowned in 1869 when he fell overboard from a sailboat while travelling between the village of Sheguiandah and the town of Killarney. Henry, their eldest, who had opened a saw mill in Massey, Ontario, also died suddenly of a severe case of pneumonia at the age of 50.³

In 1896 the wealth amassed by Thomas C. Sims allowed him to build a large mansion for his family on a two acres plot of land in Little Current. A Mr. B Becks designed the house and was also the main carpenter and stone mason who did the bulk of the structural work. The foundation was built using large two-foot blocks which were placed on gravel above the quicksand to provide a solid footing for the three-storey building. As well, a 40 foot chimney was erected at the rear of the building as part of the heat plant which was fired by wood. Originally, the mansion was conceived as a two family residence, and so a large double stairway heading from the front door was

constructed with a wall down the centre of it dividing the building in two. Prior to electricity coming to Little Current the entire home was lit by gas lamps, generated by a carbide machine in the basement.

When Thomas C. Sims died unexpectedly, the family heard that the local diocese was contemplating the establishment of a hospital in Little Current. The Sims family reached out to the then Bishop Ralph Hubert Dignan, bishop of the Diocese of Sault Ste. Marie. He immediately suggested to the Sisters of St. Joseph that they go and look at the house and the property to judge its suitability. The house was initially serviced for water by a windmill near the waterfront, pumping the water all the way up to a 40 barrel water tank on the third floor. Later the windmill was replaced by a gas pump. This was the only home in the town at that time with such an automated water system. The family had surmised that this was a key factor in the final purchase of the house by the Sisters of St. Joseph.⁴

THE SISTERS OF ST. JOSEPH

In a little village in Le Puy, France, the Sisters of St. Joseph began as a small nucleus of six women gathered to alleviate the suffering caused by civil and religious strife. A travelling Jesuit missionary, Father Jean Pierre Médaille, SJ, became associated with them and by 1650, these women were recognized as a congregation of Religious Women—The Sisters of St. Joseph. During the French Revolution several Sisters were guillotined which forced the others to go into hiding, but finally in 1794 they were free to return to their works of mercy. The congregation was re-established in 1807 as The Sisters of St. Joseph of Lyon. Thirty years after surviving the French Revolution, the congregation spread to North America when six Sisters landed in St. Louis, Missouri in 1836. From there they established themselves in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Then in 1851, at the bequest of the bishop, the congregation came to Toronto, Ontario which was in the midst of an epidemic of fever. Thus began the Canadian Federation.⁵

Within 40 years, the congregation established other independent branches in the dioceses of Hamilton, London, Peterborough and Pembroke where Sisters founded and operated orphanages, schools and hospitals. In 1881, four Sisters travelled by steamboat from Toronto to Prince Arthur's Landing (the present day city of Thunder Bay) at the head of Lake Superior and began ministry in Northern Ontario.

By 1936, Bishop R.H. Dignan, bishop of the Diocese of Sault Ste. Marie, invited the Peterborough Sisters working within his diocese to form a new independent congregation for his vast and fast growing diocese which consisted mainly of immigrants and a large indigenous population. One hundred and twenty one Sisters working in Sault Ste. Marie, Thunder Bay, Sudbury, North Bay and Sault Ste. Marie responded. The new Congregation assumed responsibility for St. Joseph's Hospital (1884) in Port Arthur and St. Joseph's Hospital (1931) in North Bay and was soon sending Sisters off for further studies in nursing instruction and hospital administration. Within eight years, they opened a hospital in Blind River (1940) and Little Current 1944.

Carrying on the tradition of all the Sisters of St. Joseph, this youngest group, with its Motherhouse in North Bay, began to reach out to the small communities around Lake Superior and on Manitoulin Island. Sisters opened separate schools in the province and established hospitals where no one had gone before. They cared for orphans and the aged and also brought with them the gift of music, which they taught instrumentally and in choirs.⁶

LITTLE CURRENT PETITIONS FOR A HOSPITAL

On May 29, 1944, the Corporation of the Town of Little Current, under the signature of the Mayor H. Hembruff, and Councillors R.G. Young, Charles Kimily, W.R. Crables, C.J. Collins, J.D. Cond and Cliff Lochyer, wrote to the Most Rev. R.H. Dignan, Bishop of the Diocese of Sault Ste. Marie and the Honourable Dr. R.P. Vivian, Minister of Health, requesting that approval be granted for the Sisters of St. Joseph to establish and operate a hospital in the town of Little Current.

Their letter speaks of an "acute shortage of hospital care" adding that "many lives could have been saved in the past if a hospital had been established here." The request states that "the Sisters of St. Joseph, who have had such wonderful success in the operation of hospitals in Northern Ontario, be granted the right to open and operate a hospital in the Town of Little Current." On May 30, 1944, the Municipalities of Rutherford and George Island also endorsed the request.⁷

The hospital was to serve a population of 1,080 in Little Current, and 700 in Killarney (the Township of Rutherford).

St. Joseph's Hospital, Little Current, Ontario

All photos courtesy of the Archives of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Sault Ste. Marie, North Bay, Ontario



St. Joseph's Hospital, Little Current, Ontario — 1944-1977



St. Joseph's Hospital, Little Current, Ontario — 1969

Delays in getting approval hampered progress. However, despite these, on July 7, 1944 Mr. C.J. Telfer, Inspector of Hospitals, noted the intended approval for the project from the Minister of Health. He suggested that, if the proposed building was not adaptable to hospital purposes, then consideration should be given to engage an architect to erect a one-story unit at an approximate cost of \$2,000 per bed.

However, Bishop Dignan, along with Dr. R.P. Vivian, the Minister of Health, strongly felt that the proposed house could be renovated to include a slight addition to serve the needs of the area at that time. Should additional facilities be needed, the house could be used to service the staff in charge of the hospital.

In his letter of July 8, 1944, Bishop Dignan asked for specific approval to renovate the Sims' house, stressing that their request not be delayed because the need was urgent. He continued by outlining that there were many cases where persons had died, or were presently fighting for their lives in Sudbury because of the lack of facilities on Manitoulin Island.

In Bishop Dignan's *Minute Book*—a series of handwritten dated notations the bishop used to record the milestones of the Diocese of Sault Ste. Marie—he noted the following:

August 7, 1944: Issue decree of canonical erection of St. Joseph's Hospital, Little Current Ontario. Authorize Sisters also to staff local Separate School; purchase Sims' property for \$7,300 for hospital purpose.⁸

On August 8, 1944, Bishop Dignan informed the Minister of Health that the Sims residence had been purchased, that the authorization for alterations and an addition had been granted, and that Sister St. Reginald, CSJ had been named the first Administrator of the proposed new hospital.⁹

ST. JOSEPH'S HOSPITAL, LITTLE CURRENT ESTABLISHED

The Minister of Health gave final approval for the project to proceed on September 29, 1944, recommending an Order in Council be issued. On October 17, 1944 the Order in Council was finally issued, granting the Sisters of St. Joseph of the Diocese of Sault Ste. Marie the right

to establish a public general hospital in Little Current on the site of the Sims property. The hospital was to be named St. Joseph's General Hospital.

A General Contractor, A.J. Coules of Sudbury was engaged on October 17, 1944 with a contract signed on November 3, 1944. Difficulty in having building plans approved for the 18-bed hospital continued. As well, a concern came from the town of Mindemoya, another community on Manitoulin Island, where there was already an established health facility.

The history of the Mindemoya Hospital began when Dr. Robert Davis set up practice in 1919. In 1934, the community purchased from Dr. Davis what became known as the Mindemoya Red Cross Hospital. This was the only public hospital on Manitoulin Island until the Sisters of St. Joseph set up their hospital in Little Current.¹⁰

The community of Mindemoya was naturally concerned that the new hospital in Little Current would eclipse and overtake their hospital. Bishop Dignan was concerned that Mr. T.H. Farquhar, the federal Member of Parliament for the riding was interfering unduly. On November 3, 1944, the bishop assured the honourable member that St. Joseph's Hospital would not "cripple" the facilities in Mindemoya, and informed him that the idea was for St. Joseph's Hospital in Little Current to cooperate and augment Manitoulin Island health care.

By November 1944, the Bishop realized that the \$5,000 cost of the original project (because of renovations required by the Department of Health) had increased to somewhere between \$15,000 to \$20,000 dollars. The contractor A.J. Coules created further delays and cost overruns. A decision was made to hand the project over to an alternate contractor, Harper and Vuori, to complete.¹¹ Mr. Harper and Vuori proceeded by completing the painting and decorating, along with applying the exterior cladding on the addition with asbestos and brick siding. All this was accomplished by August 1945. New steps and a cement walk way to the road and entrance were also completed.¹²

It is interesting to note that the Bishop of Sault Ste. Marie, Most Reverend R.H. Dignan, conducted the entire planning, correspondence

with Department of Health, Solicitors, Contractors, Bank Managers, and all involved in the establishment of the Little Current hospital. His detailed involvement is portrayed by the anguish he experienced as he met with repeated delays, set-backs and problems. Certainly the birth of the hospital in Little Current can be attributed to his continued persistent efforts to relieve the suffering of the people of this area.¹³

OFFICIAL OPENING OF FIRST HOSPITAL

The Official Opening of St. Joseph's Hospital in Little Current occurred on Thursday September 25, 1945.¹⁴ The chapel in the new hospital on the upper floor of the building was blessed and dedicated by Bishop Dignan at 9:00 am. Dinner was served to a large number of the visiting clergy from the Sault, Blind River, Killarney, Sudbury and Wikwemikong at noon. A social reception was held between 3:00-6:00 PM when hundreds of visitors from the various towns and cities were shown through the new hospital as the building was officially opened to the public.

Rev. Father M.J. Kelly, of town, acted as chairman for the occasion and introduced the various speakers. His Excellency Bishop R. H. Dignan made a short address at the reception and thanked all those who had made it possible to have this excellent institution located in what he thought was one of the finest locations in the entire North country. He was sure that the Sisters of St. Joseph who were in charge of the new hospital would do everything to merit the confidence imposed in them and that the new hospital would fulfill the hospital needs of the community. Short addresses were also given by Dr. J. O. McDonald, of Sudbury; Canon Haines and Rev. E. W. Shaw, of town, and Mr. Fabbro, the architect, of Sudbury. Mrs. E. O. Vincent was the convener of the social function and Mrs. W. J. Golden acted as hostess, being assisted by the ladies of the parish. Other visitors were Chas. Low, of Killarney, who brought a large number of visitors from the fishing village; Drs. C. R. Young and Jno. Carruthers, of town, and several of the town officials.¹⁵

Although the hospital has a capacity for 20 beds, only 10 active beds were opened immediately due to a delay in delivery of baby cubicles and X-ray equipment.

The basement housed the heating plant, the laundry room (equipped with the most modern equipment of the day), the vegetable cellars and coal bins, the nurse's dining room and kitchen, as well as all the apparatus necessary for the service of meals and medicine. A large dumb waiter went from the lower floor to service the upper floors. A laundry shoot connected all floors to the laundry. Hardwood floors and inlaid linoleum were used as flooring.

Sister Reginald, the first Administrator, was also a specialist X-ray technician.

THE 1953 ADDITION AND THE 1965 NEW HOSPITAL

In an entry in his *Minute Book*, dated February 16, 1953, Bishop Dignan notes his authorization for the construction of a further addition to St. Joseph's General Hospital with the blessing of the addition occurring on August 30, 1953.¹⁶ This addition added 22 beds to the hospital.¹⁷

In August 1953 a grant of \$18,280.00 from the Atkinson Charitable Foundation was awarded for the construction of an elevator. The grant meant that patients no longer needed to endure a sometimes torturous stretcher trip upstairs and down. Although the stretcher bearers were always careful, there was the constant danger that one might stumble or fall and a patient be further endangered.

A campaign, to add another addition, noted that 134 children were born in the hospital from its opening in 1945 until early 1965. Although originally built to accommodate 24 patients, occasionally the hospital was compelled to accommodate up to 40. From a total of 14 persons being attended to in its first month of operation, the facility was helping 60 persons a month in 1965. As well, 675 men, women and children had been X-Rayed in a two-year period prior to 1965.¹⁸

A special meeting was held at the Gore Bay Municipal Chambers on February 14, 1965 to present a report on the financial requirements needed for an expansion of the hospital in Little Current. Mr. Barney Turner, Chairman of the St. Joseph's General Hospital Board addressed the meeting. Other board members also attended: Mr. A.E. Ralston, chairman of the Finance Committee and Mr. Larry Pope, Director. Mayor Marvin Woods, along with other Town Councillors,

as well as Mr. Tom Clark, the Town Clerk, were also present.

The argument proposed that the present hospital was merely a converted residence. While it provided excellent care to patients, it had its limits. It had become a regular occurrence to refer and transfer many patients to Sudbury for treatment. This had become a costly procedure that, while not only expensive, caused delays in diagnosis and treatment—not to mention the inconvenience of family members wishing to visit their sick family members. The space of the existing hospital in 1965 allowed for 48 beds, and provided no accommodation for the chronically ill.

On February 25, 1965 the Board of Directors were informed that when the new hospital was built, the present hospital building would be used for administration, living quarters, storage and instruction class rooms. They were also informed that the new hospital would extend south from the present building and would contain two floors with double corridors and a basement.

Tenders for the construction of the new hospital were opened May 7, 1965. Mr. Manfred May was chosen as the architect for the project and Sullivan and Son of Arnprior chosen as the general contractor. Actual construction began on June 28, 1965 with the necessary sewer hookups. The official sod-turning ceremony occurred at 4:00 pm on August 4, with the general public invited to join the Mayors, Reeves and other municipal officials.¹⁹

In October 1966, the Department of National Health and Welfare forwarded a cheque in the amount of \$150,000.00 as a special contribution to the building fund on behalf of the First Nations population in the area. Since the closing of the nursing unit at Manitowaning, the patient load carried by the Hospital in Little Current has increased.²⁰

It is worth noting, that the many-times renovated Sims house, which made up the first St. Joseph's General Hospital, was demolished in 1982.²¹

OFFICIAL OPENING OF NEW HOSPITAL

The official opening of the new St. Joseph's General Hospital building occurred on Tuesday October 18, 1966 at 3:00 in the afternoon. The program outlines the schedule of events as follows:

INVOCATION:

His Excellency, Most Reverend Alexander Carter, D.D., Bishop of Sault Ste. Marie.

CHAIRMAN'S REMARKS:

Mr. B. G. Turner, Chairman, Board of Directors

INTRODUCTION OF PLATFORM GUESTS:

Mr. Albert Rolston,
Vice-Chairman, Board of Directors

MUSICAL INTERLUDE:

Sisters of St. Joseph

GREETINGS:

1. Mr. John Farquhar, Mayor of Little Current.
2. Federal Government.
3. Mr. Stanley Farquhar, Provincial Government.
4. Mr. Ray Jessup, Director,
Ontario Hospital Association.
5. Mr. Marvin Wood, Mayor of Gore Bay,
Representative of the Municipalities.
6. Chief John Wakegijig,
Representative of the Indian Citizens.
7. Doctor John F. Bailey, Medical Staff.
8. Mrs. Mary Pinand, President,
Ladies' Auxiliary.

CUTTING OF RIBBON:

Sister Rose Marie, C.S.J.,
Administrator, St. Joseph's Hospital

PRESENTATION OF KEY:

Mr. M. Sullivan, Contractor,



His Excellency, Most Reverend Alexander Carter, D.D.,
Bishop of Sault Ste. Marie at opening 1966.

M. Sullivan & Son Ltd., Arnprior
To Mr. Manfred J. May, Architect, North Bay
To the Reverend Mother M. St. Edward, C.S.J.

Mr. K. Patterson
Mr. C. Stewart
Mr. B. Vanzant

Mr. C. Spec
Mr. C. Valiquette

EXPRESSION OF GRATITUDE:

The Reverend Mother M. St. Edward, C.S.J.

INTRODUCTION OF GUEST SPEAKER:

Reverend D. J. Hourigan, S.J.

GUEST SPEAKER:

His Excellency, Most Reverend Alexander Carter D.D.,
Bishop of Sault Ste. Marie.

APPRECIATION:

Reverend Canon D. H. Dixon

MUSICAL INTERLUDE:

Sisters of St. Joseph

"GOD SAVE THE QUEEN"

TOUR OF THE HOSPITAL

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Chairman: Mr. G. B. Turner

Vice-Chairman: Mr. A. E. Rolston

Members:

Dr. J. F. Bailey	Mr. A. Bateman
Mr. J. Bousquet	Mr. R. Charette
Mr. L. Cope	Dr. J. A. Henry
Mr. L. Labarge	Mr. L. Lowrie

MEDICAL STAFF

Honourary President – Dr. G. R. Walker
President – Dr. J. A. Henry
Vice-President – Dr. F. J. Bailey
Dr. R. Hayward
Dr. J. B. McQuay, Mindemoya
Dr. F. A. Strain, Gore Bay
Dr. H. A. Van Tripp, Manitowaning

FURTHER DEVELOPMENTS

On January 25, 1968 a bronze plaque was unveiled by Sr. Rose Marie, the Administrator and Mr. Turner, who had been Chairman of the Board of Directors when the new hospital had been built. The bronze plaque commemorated the building of the new hospital and honoured those who gave so much time and effort to make the new facility a reality. The plaque was placed at the main entrance hall of the hospital.

Until 1966, the Sisters ran the hospital's administration themselves and had a lay Board acting in an advisory capacity. At that time, the administration, the director of nursing, the director of dietary, the director of business and the office manager were all Sisters of St. Joseph. In 1966 the Bylaws were changed giving the lay Board of Directors the power to operate the hospital on a day-to-day basis. The Sisters retained veto power, but it was never exercised.

The next major change occurred in January 1976 when Mr. Alec Browne became the first lay administrator of the hospital. At the time he stated: "We try to live within the philosophy of the Sisters of St. Joseph. Their philosophy is to treat a patient as a person and not just as an interesting case. They treat people with respect, dignity and kindness, and the hospital will continue to function with this spirit.... We are going to miss the Sisters. They bring a definite atmosphere to the hospital. Fortunately, our staff has been imbued with their spirit."

THE "PEOPLE" OF THE HOSPITAL

Dr. J. A. Henry was a senior doctor of the medical staff who arrived in Little Current in 1946 after serving six years with the Royal Canadian Navy. A quiet,



New Chapel
St. Joseph's Hospital, Little Current, 1966

unassuming surgeon and general practitioner, Dr. Henry was often found in his office well after midnight, especially when his patients were still in the hospital to be cared for. His practice and service to the hospital lasted until his retirement in 1984, a period of 38 years.

Dr. J. F. Bailey, also a surgeon and general practitioner, started his practice in Little Current in July 6, 1948. He provided 45 years of service to the hospital and community and retired in 1993.

Dr. J.A. Dixon, was senior in years of experience among the hospital's trio of doctors, who had come out of retirement to help on Manitoulin Island.

SISTERS OF ST. JOSEPH LEAVE HOSPITAL

A press release, issued on February 3, 1977 by Mr. Alex Browne, the Administrator of St. Joseph's Hospital, informed the community of Little Current that the Congregation of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Sault Ste. Marie would no longer be able to sponsor the hospital after 1977. The board itself had been informed at a Board of Directors meeting held on Friday January 28.

The Sisters of the Congregation were themselves informed in a letter from Sister M. Regina, General Superior, dated February 1st, 1977. The letter states:

As you are aware, it is the responsibility of the General Council to periodically examine our various Apostolates to make sure we have the personnel and financial resources to adequately carry out our missions. During the past three years we have been concerned about our ability to sponsor a Hospital in Little Current.

In those three years, surveys and consultation were conducted throughout the Congregation and meetings were held with His Excellency Bishop Alexander Carter, Bishop of the Diocese of Sault Ste. Marie at the time.

The transition to lay board and administration had already begun prior to the Sisters leaving. However, transfer of ownership of the hospital building took a little more time to arrange and finalize. Legal paper work was initiated and transfer of the property was finalized on January 31, 1980. The Ministry of Health provided the Board of Directors with a cheque for

\$350,000 to buy the building from the Sisters. "The Order (of Sisters) pioneered the building of hospitals in the North," Ontario Minister of Health Dennis Timbrell remarked, "And now they are moving into specialized and preventative health care fields. The \$350,000 will help them in those endeavours."²²

In March 1978 the Manitoulin Health Centre Corporation was formed. A plaque was unveiled in 1979 to honour the contribution of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Sault Ste. Marie. It reads:

SISTERS OF ST. JOSEPH OF SAULT STE. MARIE

have provided hospital care to the sick and injured of Manitoulin Island and District on this site from August 1944 to September 1979.

This plaque is erected in grateful appreciation for their self-sacrificing efforts and tender care so generously given to all to whom they ministered during this period.

Erected September 25, 1979
by the Manitoulin Health Centre
and grateful citizens.

ENDNOTES

1. Pearen, Shelly J. *Exploring Manitoulin*. Toronto, University of Toronto Press. 1992. p. 23.
2. *Ibid*, p.32.
3. Rootsweb: Finding our roots together. https://wc.rootsweb.com/cgi-bin/igm.cgi?op=GET&db=iris_hclark&id=I18960. Obituary, uncited. Henry S. Sims Dead (handwritten 1905)
On Thursday, the 21st inst., T.C. Sims, received word from Massey of the sudden death that day of his brother Henry S. Sims. He and his brothers J.G. Sims and C.L.D. Sims left Friday morning for Massey. Mr. Sims had recently purchased a sawmill near Massey and had been working there all winter fitting it up. Some time ago he caught a severe cold and was confined to the house for a short time and thinking he was better than he was he went back to the mill to work. He got a further cold and it developed into pneumonia from which he died after two weeks' painful illness at the age of 50 years 8 days. Mr. Sims was the son of Rev. J. W. Sims, who while conducting the English Church Mission at Sheguiandah was drowned from a sailboat in going from that village to Killarney in 1869. Henry was born at Abergavenny, Wales and when two years old his parents moved to Canada. For a time they lived in New Brunswick, near Fredericton. Then they moved to Glen Williams in Halton county where Mr. Sims taught school. Here is prepared himself for the ministry and was ordained as an English Church clergyman. His first charge was at Dungannon in Huron county. In 1864 he brought his family to the Manitoulin and for three years conducted the mission at Manitowaning after which he moved to Sheguiandah and took charge of the English Church mission there. At the time of his death the family were residing on the farm near Shguiandah. Henry at this time was a lad of fifteen years of age and he and his four younger brothers, Fred, John, Thomas, and Charles, worked the farm and provided for their mother and sister. In 1873 Henry married Maria J. Richards, daughter of the late William Richards, of Howland township. Henry then started farming for himself in the township of Howland and was instrumental in organizing S.S. No. 3. He always took an active interest in all public matters and for many years was clerk of Howland. He resigned the clerkship when he went into the general store business in Little Current in 1883.
4. The information for much of this section was taken from, Sims, Bill. "...and there was once a house." A series of articles in *The Manitoulin Expositor* concerning Saint Joseph's Hospital in Little Current, Ontario between September 25, 1945 and December 4, 1994. (66 pages with illustrations) 1994.
5. *As the Tree Grows, Celebrating 100 Years of the Sisters of St. Joseph, Peterborough, 1890-1990*. 1993, pp 2, 3.
6. Documents in the Archives of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Sault Ste. Marie.
7. Letter from the Town of Little Current to the Most Rev. R.H. Dignan and to the Hon. Dr. R.P. Vivian from the Mayor and Councillors of Little Current. May 29, 1944. Archives of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Sault Ste. Marie.
8. Dignan, Ralph Hubert. *Sources*. Humbert, Greg J. editor. Archives, Diocese of Sault Ste. Marie, 1995. p. 239.
9. St. Joseph's Hospital, Little Current, Ontario. Archives of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Sault Ste. Marie.
10. *Community Hospitals and Health Care in Northeastern Ontario: Transforming the Patient Experience*. North East Local Integration Network, October 2014, p.60.
11. St. Joseph's Hospital, Little Current, Ontario. Archives of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Sault Ste. Marie.
12. Little Current Hospital: September 25, 1945. Archives of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Sault Ste. Marie.
13. St. Joseph's Hospital, Little Current, Ontario. Archives of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Sault Ste. Marie.
14. Bishop Dignan notes in his journal that the date is September 20, 1945, contrary to the widely held date of September 25. Humbert, Greg J. *Sources: Ralph Hubert Dignan*. Archives, Diocese of Sault St. Marie, 1995. p. 247.
15. "St. Joseph's Hospital in Little Current opens to the public." In *The Manitoulin Expositor*, September 25, 1945.
16. Dignan, Ralph Hubert. *Sources*. Humbert, Greg J. editor. Archives, Diocese of Sault Ste. Marie, 1995. pp. 311 and 315.
17. *Community Hospitals and Health Care in Northeastern Ontario: Transforming the Patient Experience*. North East Local Integration Network, October 2014, p. 60.
18. *The Manitoulin Expositor*, 1965. Actual date of the edition was not recorded.
19. St. Joseph's Hospital, Little Current, Ontario. Notes from the Archives of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Sault Ste. Marie.
20. *The Manitoulin Expositor*, Thursday October 13, 1966.
21. Pearen, Shelly J. *Exploring Manitoulin*. Toronto, University of Toronto Press. 1992. p. 34.
22. *The Manitoulin Expositor*, Wednesday February 6, 1980. p. 3.

APPENDIX ONE

Sisters of St. Joseph of Sault Ste. Marie Who Served at St. Joseph's Hospital, Little Current

1944

Sister St. Reginald
Sister Lorena
Sister Paula

1945

Sister St. Reginald
Sister Lorena
Sister Eugenie
Sister Margaret Anne
Sister Paula
Sister Ignatia
Sister Benedict

1946

Sister St. Irma
Sister Thomasina
Sister Margaret Anne
Sister Ignatia

1947

Sister St. Irma
Sister Dympna
Sister St. Reginald
Sister Rose Marie
Sister St. Peter
Sister St. James

1948

Sister St. Irma
Sister Dympna
Sister Melanie
Sister Winnifred
Sister Antoinette

1949

Sister Mary Alice
Sister Dympna
Sister St. Reginald

Sister St. Roch
Sister Benedict
Sister Adele

1950

Sister Rose Marie
Sister Dympna
Sister Anna Teresa
Sister St. Stephen
Sister Louis Joseph

1951

Sister Rose Marie
Sister Mary Grace
Sister Anna Teresa
Sister Loretta
Sister St. Stephen
Sister St. James

1952

Sister Rose Marie
Sister Mary Grace
Sister Eugene
Sister Loretta
Sister St. Stephen
Sister St. James

1953

Sister Rose Marie
Sister Mary Grace
Sister Eugene
Sister Columba
Sister St. Stephen
Sister Mary of the Assumption

1954

Sister Rose Marie
Sister Mary Grace
Sister Columba
Sister St. Stephen
Sister Monica Marie
Sister Monica
Sister Josephine

1. This list of names is from the annual Directory list prepared by the Sisters of St. Joseph for each Sister's use and posted also in each Congregational House and Institution.

1955

Sister Rose Marie
Sister Mary Grace
Sister Columba
Sister Mary Agnes
Sister Monica Marie
Sister Monica
Sister Josephine

1956

Sister St. Reginald
Sister Mary Grace
Sister Mary Agnes
Sister Monica
Sister St. Gerald
Sister St. Catherine

1957

Sister St. Reginald
Sister Mary Agnes
Sister Loretta
Sister Margaret Marie
Sister Monica
Sister Beatrice
Sister St. Catherine

1958

Sister St. Reginald
Sister St. Irma
Sister Loretta
Sister Monica
Sister St. Roch
Sister Beatrice
Sister St. Catherine

1959

Sister St. Reginald
Sister St. Irma
Sister Loretta
Sister Monica
Sister St. Anne
Sister St. Roch
Sister Beatrice
Sister St. Ambrose

1960

Sister St. Reginald
Sister St. Irma
Sister Loretta
Sister Monica
Sister St. Anne

Sister St. Roch
Sister Beatrice
Sister St. Ambrose

1961

Sister Rose Marie
Sister St. Irma
Sister Mary Grace
Sister Monica
Sister St. Anne

1962

Sister Rose Marie
Sister St. Irma
Sister Loretta
Sister Mary Grace
Sister Monica
Sister St. Anne

1963

Sister Rose Marie
Sister Mary Grace
Sister St. Irma
Sister Lorena
Sister Monica

1964

Sister Rose Marie
Sister Mary Grace
Sister St. Stephen
Sister Monica
Sister St. Denis

1965

Sister Rose Marie
Sister Mary Grace
Sister St. Irma
Sister St. Stephen
Sister Monica
Sister St. Denis

1966

Sister Rose Marie
Sister Mary Grace
Sister St. Joseph
Sister Celesta
Sister St. Jude
Sister Monica
Sister Dorothy
Sister Gertrude

1967

Sister Beatrice
Sister Mary Grace
Sister St. Joseph
Sister St. Alban
Sister St. Thomas
Sister Celesta
Sister Monica
Sister St. Jerome
Sister St. Gerald
Sister Dorothy
Sister Gertrude
Sister St. Denis

1968

Sister Beatrice
Sister St. Thomas
Sister Celesta
Sister Mary Grace
Sister Monica
Sister St. Jerome
Sister Dorothy
Sister St. Joseph
Sister Gertrude
Sister Martina
Sister St. Denis

1969

Sister St. Michael
Sister St. Thomas
Sister Celesta
Sister St. Jerome
Sister Sheila
Sister: St. Joseph
Sister St. Walter
Sister Gertrude
Sister Philomena
Sister Martina
Sister Francis Marie
Sister Mary Peter

1970

Sister Marjorie Shannon
Sister Frances Gavin
Sister Gertrude
Sister Dorothy Regan
Sister Marilyn Gottro
Sister Patricia Hassett
Sister Diane Bottos
Sister Margaret Fay

1971

Sister Marjorie Shannon
Sister Mary Rosary
Sister St. Christopher
Sister Frances Gavin
Sister Gloria Grant
Sister Phyllis O'Connor
Sister Dianne Bottos
Sister Glenys McKillop

1972

Sister Louise Rioux
Sister St. Christopher
Sister Gloria Grant
Sister Dorothy Regan
Sister Marjorie Shannon
Sister Patricia Hassett
Sister Ersilia Tedesco
Sister Shannon Hickey
Sister Glenys McKillop
Sister Emer Kelly
Sister Rita Godon

1973

Sister Louise Rioux
Sister St. Christopher
Sister Gloria Grant
Sister Dorothy Regan
Sister Marjorie Shannon
Sister Patricia Hassett
Sister Ersilia Tedesco
Sister Shannon Hickey
Sister Emer Kelly

1974

Sister Rita Laberge
Sister Ann Marie Walsh
Sister Gloria Grant
Sister Dorothy Regan
Sister Patricia Hassett
Sister Ruth Godon
Sister Emer Kelly

1975

Sister Rita Laberge
Sister Ann Marie Walsh
Sister Gloria Grant
Sister Dorothy Regan
Sister Patricia Hassett
Sister Ruth Godon
Sister Emer Kelly

1976

Sister Dorothy Regan
Sister Mary O'Neill
Sister Patricia Hassett
Sister Ruth Godon
Sister Emer Kelly

1977

The Sister of St. Joseph of Sault Ste. Marie formally withdraw St. Joseph's Hospital in Little Current.

APPENDIX TWO

St. Joseph's Hospital, Little Current

P.O. Box 250 (705) 368-2300

NEWS RELEASE

FOR RELEASE THURSDAY FEBRUARY 3, 1977

The regular meeting of the Board of Directors of St. Joseph's General Hospital, Little Current, was held on Friday, January 28th, 1977. Attending the meeting as representatives of the General Council, Sisters of St. Joseph from the Motherhouse in North Bay, were Sister Margaret Smith, Hospital Co-ordinator for the Order, and Sister Marie McGirr, Council Member. At this meeting, the Board of Directors was informed that the Sisters of St. Joseph would be unable to continue to sponsor St. Joseph's General Hospital in Little Current after 1977.

Sister Margaret Smith stated that the Order is faced with a decrease in the number of Sisters available for work in hospitals. The Order at present owns and operates six Hospitals in Northern Ontario: in Thunder Bay, Elliot Lake, Blind River, Little Current, Sudbury and North Bay.

In making the decision to withdraw the Order's sponsorship from Little Current the General Council of the Sisters of St. Joseph considered many factors. With the Government of Ontario supplying finances for the operation of the Hospital, there is no problem in obtaining well qualified lay staff to serve the health care needs of the people. This was not the case 32 years ago when the Sisters came to establish the Hospital in Little Current. At the present time there are only 3 Sisters of St. Joseph serving in staff positions in the Hospital.

The Board of Directors are capable of providing the leadership which will assure the citizens of Little Current and the surrounding areas of the continued high standard of health care which has been developed over the past 30 years.

Mr. Romeo Charette, Chairman of the Hospital Board, speaking on behalf of the Board expressed great regret that it was necessary for the Sisters to withdraw from the Little Current Hospital. Dr. Bailey and Dr. Henry, representing the Medical Staff, recalled the hard work and dedication of the Sisters of St. Joseph in establishing and operating the Hospital prior to any Government support.

Various other Board members expressed their regret that this decision was necessary and also offered their thanks and appreciation to the Sisters for the 32 years of service. The Sisters assured the Board that they would do all in their power to make the transition period as smooth as possible.

Further meetings would be arranged throughout the year to finalize the details necessary in such a changeover. It is expected that the Sisters presently working in the Hospital will remain until July or August, 1977.

Sister Margaret Smith stated that the two missionary Sisters of St. Joseph presently working with the Jesuit Missions team will be remaining on Manitoulin Island.

Subsequent to this Board meeting a letter was sent to Hospital Staff members notifying them of the Sisters' decision to withdraw their sponsorship from the Hospital. In the letter, Mr. Charette, Chairman of the Board, assured the staff that the changeover of ownership which would take place sometimes before the end of 1977 would not interfere with the present staffing or operation of the Hospital.

For further information please contact:

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St. Joseph's General Hospital,
Little Current, Ontario
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Foundations is a publication of the *The Great Canadian Catholic Hospital History Project* and the *Catholic Hospitals Digital History Books Collection* project which have as their mission "Documenting the legacy and contribution of the Congregations of Religious Women in Canada, their mission in health care, and the founding and operation of Catholic hospitals." When a book or booklet of a Catholic hospital or nursing school is not available for digitizing, *Foundations* provides basic historical information and dates of the organization and the ministry of the Sisters.

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Foundations Editor

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