

ST PATRICK CATHOLIC CEMETERY

This information was scanned from the Book "From Then Til Now" written by Kenneth McCutchan in 1969. Ken was a researcher of high reputation.

"Among the early Irish and German settlers were some who were followers of the Roman Catholic faith. Under the leadership of Richard Raleigh these people banded together and about 1848 were able to construct a frame building for a house of worship. This became known as St. Patrick's and was the first church in the vicinity to boast a steeple and a bell. It was sometimes referred to, especially by the Protestants, as the "red-headed church," because the round tin dome on the top of the steeple was painted red.

The Catholic Diocese office in Evansville has practically no records of this church. It is simply mentioned as a mission church of the early days. So far as I have been able to determine from what records I have found, there was never a resident priest in McCutchanville. Masses were said by traveling priests or by those who came occasionally from Evansville. The membership was never large. The St. John's Catholic Church in Warrick County was organized in 1868 and the first services were held there in 1869. St. Patrick's was apparently closed soon thereafter, and the congregation transferred to St. John's. However, the old building stood for many years, used only now and then for a funeral Mass or some other special event. It was finally razed about 1890.

When the church was abandoned the cemetery behind it fell into disuse. My great-grandfather, Hugh Horan, was buried there in 1859, but his grave was probably never marked with a stone. When his wife, who became a Protestant, died many years later, an inscription to his memory was placed on the side of her monument in the McCutchanville Cemetery.

Few people in the community today even remember the location of St. Patrick's Church and cemetery. It stood on the hill almost directly across the road from the McCutchanville Community Association Park at the site of the present Ross house. The cemetery was a few dozen yards behind this house.

I remember visiting that cemetery when I was a small boy. It was then only a thicket of brier and locust sprouts. Many of the markers were ornamental wrought-iron crosses of the type one finds today in old European cemeteries, but most of them at that time were nearly rusted away. A few of the stones bore inscriptions in German. Today nothing remains but a few blocks of stone that were perhaps monument bases and a large bed of twining myrtle that has grown wild from some long forgotten grave."