

Coloured Society of the Holy Family
List of Members, 1843-1844
Transcriber's Notes

Background

The Coloured Society of the Holy Family was established by and for the Black Catholics of Baltimore in 1843 and was in existence until 1845. Weekly meetings for this devotional society were held on Sunday evenings in Calvert Hall, the parish hall of the Cathedral of the Assumption, where members prayed together, received spiritual direction, sang hymns, and conducted official business. A lending library was established for members, as was a formal choir. Sulpician Father John F. Hickey, an assistant at the Cathedral of the Assumption during this period, was appointed director. Elected officers were: John Noel, president; Washington Ford, Nelson Moquet, and George Holly, vice presidents; and Mary Holland, Harriet London, Elizabeth C. Berry, and Margaret Howard, counsellors. The Society voted to disband in 1845 when the decision was made to use Calvert Hall for a new boys' school (Calvert Hall College) and was no longer available as a meeting space.

The Society's journal records the names of the close to 300 people who petitioned to join the Society. Members committed to a monthly subscription of 6^{1/4} cents, which was used to pay for operating expenses and to support the Society's charitable work. In addition to membership and subscription records, the journal also includes meeting minutes and financial records regarding donations made in the name of the Society and by individual members to the Cathedral Fund Society, which had been established to retire the cathedral's building debt.

Transcribers' Notes for Centralized Name Index

Please note that abbreviations were frequently used when recording first and middle names. In instances where the abbreviation for the name is clear, the name has been spelled out in the transcription (Elisab for Elisabeth and Wm for William). In cases where only the first letter was noted or it's unclear what name the abbreviation stands for, the entry was transcribed as written. In several cases, the spelling of an abbreviated name was clarified in a different section of the journal. It is important to keep in mind that the spelling of names in these records is not consistent. As a result, it is not unusual to find one listed under several different spellings. It is always best to review the full list of names to identify other possible spellings, instead of limiting your search to one specific spelling.

In instances where an entire or partial name was crossed out, the decision was made to create an entry for the name, unless it was obvious that the name had been mistakenly entered as a duplicate. It is noted in the comments if the name was crossed out.

Despite our best efforts some of the names may be spelled or identified incorrectly due to difficulties in reading the handwriting. Distinguishing between what was a first, middle, or surname also presented challenges and may be incorrect in some cases. Question marks were to denote uncertainty or a possible spelling.

Explanation of Fields used in the Centralized Name Index

Last, First, and Middle Names: Names have been transcribed and recorded to the best of our ability. In instances where a last name was not recorded, the term “Surname” has been entered. In cases where neither a first or middle name was not recorded, the fields were left blank. In instances when transcribers were unable to determine if the person had a surname, best judgement was used to make a decision. Please note that the spelling of names was not consistent. Please check under different variations when searching the records. (Ex., London, Landan and Augustin, Augustus.)

Date: This field indicates the dated list on which the individual’s name was recorded. If a person is mentioned multiple times in the records, a separate entry was made for the year the name was listed. The Event Role field will identify the purpose of the entry.

Event Role: To help distinguish why a person’s name was recorded in the journal, different terms have been used to identify why the entry was made, including petitioner, member, and donor. A list of the terms used is included in the key prepared for the list.

Sex: The person’s gender has been identified by first and middles names, as well as by title. If the transcriber was unable to identify gender due to lack of information, an X was used instead of M or F to indicate male or female.

Comments: This field was used to note additional information noted in the record or to clarify an issue. In cases where it was noted that a person was enslaved or an enslaver, the relationship was noted in the comments.

Additional Notes

A key to the abbreviations used can be found on a separate sheet at the end of the file.