

Fr. Michael C O'Brien's Story

Researched and Written/Compiled by Billy Nolan

Thanks to Billy Nolan for sharing this material on the achievements and incredible story about Fr Michael C O'Brien from Beenatavaun.



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Fr. Michael O'Brien's Story

(He originated from Beenatavaun Killeentierna, bordering Coolick, Kilcummin area)



*Respectfully Yours,
M.C. O'Brien, V.G.*

The O'Brien's

Originated in Co Clare and settled in Castlemaine and from there to Beenatavaun Killeentierna. The O Briens are buried in Aglish Churchyard in Castlemaine.

Paddy O'Brien Born 1786 (Was a hedge school teacher) Married Mary Horan around 1810 (He Died by Drowning) He had one son Charlie O'Brien.

Paddy's only Son; Charlie O'Brien – Born 1815 Died? --- Married Ellen Fleming 1838 (A Sister to John Fleming who married Mary Nolan and lived at Curraross.)

Ellen was born 1819 to Parents David Fleming & Mrs Kerins.

Ellen & Charles O'Brien had ten children including: David, Kate, Charlie, Willie, Paddy, Kate, Mary and Michael who became Vicar General of Bangor Main U.S.A.

This is his (Fr. Michael O'Brien's) Story;

Michael O'Brien Born 18th Oct 1842 Died 1901 (The family story was that this man lived with the Indians for a few years and created an Indian to English Dictionary.). He was voted by the congregation to become Bishop but was not ratified by Rome.

He was a priest in St Mary's Church old Town Main where the Indian Reservation was and still is. He was not stationed at St Ann's which was on the Reservation, but he would have daily contact with the Indians.

(This I got from the Archivist at St Mary's Richard Kelly who's Great, Great Grandfather came from Dingle and Great Great grandmother from Kilcummin Parish close to Beenatavaun)

The Real Story;

Fr Michael C O'Brien translated an Abenaki (Native American language) Latin Dictionary of 1760 compiled by a Jean Baptiste Nudenas into English this manuscript is located in Bangor Maine. There is only one copy and it is locked in a vault. Bangor is where Fr O'Brien is interred with a large Monument to him, which shows the esteem the congregation held him in. He translated the whole book of the Latin through the medium of English, into Abenaki. It was used as a Dictionary for the white American and the Abenaki Indians for years after.

Michael became a Priest in the U.S.A. Emigrated to Portland Maine while still enrolled in his College studies. He was ordained by Bishop Bacon September 8th 1865 Prior to his Pastorate in Augusta, Maine He held assignments in Portland and Rockland Father Michael's first baptism at St Mary's was in 28th November 1869 and recorded as follows "I Baptised this day Stephen Hagerty, (sic) born the 2nd inst. of John Hagerty and Catherine Sheehan. Sponsors John and Mary O'Rourke". Little did this young 27-year Priest realise that the subject of his first Augusta baptism would become one of the founders of what is now Augusta Federal savings Bank. Hagerty an important community leader, would in later years, donate the funds for the constructions of the main altar of St Mary's Church on Western Avenue.

In the fall of 1869 Bishop Bacon transferred Father Michael O'Brien to St Michaels at Exeter, New Hampshire as a temporary Measure until a permanent Pastor was found he was there from June to November. Michael then became the first Pastor in St Mary's Bangor and eventually straight from there to Augusta to Replace a Father Egan who did outstanding work there. This is where Fr Michael went on to become Vicar Apostolate of the Portland Diocese. His Predecessor Father Egan Died in March 4th 1895 in Carney Catholic Hospital in Boston and the Funeral was held at St Dominick's Church in Portland, where Vicar General at St Mary's Fr Michael O'Brien gave a eulogy on the works and good deeds of Father Egan's pastorate at St Mary's.

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Other Notes:

On Aug. 5, 1900 Bishop James Augustine Healy died in Portland, Maine. Three names from

The Priests of the Diocese of Portland were submitted to Rome for consideration to be the next Bishop. Among those names was Michael C. O'Brien, VG. However, the Pope in Rome had received many letters from Maine clergy complaining about one or more of the candidates.

Letters from the French Catholic community and clergy also arrived in Rome stating that it was about time a French Bishop was appointed. Seeing all of the disunity and bickering among the clergy and people of Maine, the Pope appointed someone who had nothing to do with the Diocese of Portland.

Fr Michael C O'Brien Died in 1901 at the young age of 59.

Biographical notes on Rev. Michael Charles O'Brien (1842-1901)

- Born Oct. 18, 1842 Beenatavaun Killeentierna.
- March 1861 - came into the Diocese of Portland, Maine, USA
- Sept. 8, 1865 - ordained to the Diocese by David William Bacon Bishop of the Diocese of Portland
- 1866 - 1867 - Pastor at St. Bernard, Rockland, Maine
- 1867 - June 1869 - Pastor at St. Dominic, Portland, Maine
- June 1869 - Nov 1869 - Pastor at St. Michael, Exeter, New Hampshire
- Nov 1869 - 1875 - Pastor at St. Mary, Augusta, Maine
- 1875 - 1877 - Assistant at St. John, Bangor, Maine
- 1877 - 1880 - Pastor at St. Joseph, Old Town, Maine
- 1880 - 1901 - Pastor at St. Mary, Bangor, Maine
- August 15, 1893 - appointed Vicar General of the Diocese
- Died Nov. 12, 1901, Bangor, Maine
- Buried Mount Pleasant Catholic Cemetery, Bangor Maine

United States Census Records

- July 5, 1870 Census of Augusta, Maine

Fr O'Brien, Michael C age 27, occupation Catholic Priest, born Ireland

- June 5, 1880 Census of Old Town, Maine

Fr O'Brien, Michael C age 37, occupation Catholic. Clergyman, born Ireland

- June 1, 1900 Census of Bangor, Maine

Fr C O'Brien, Michael (no age given) occupation Priest, born Ireland

Photographs of the Man and his Grave with a large Monument erected by the locals in honour of him.

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ST. MARY'S CHURCH • 768 OHIO STREET • BANGOR, MAINE 04401



[Map: Get Directions](#)

In May 1872, the Bangor Congregation of St. John's Church was divided and a new parish was formed. The Rev. John W. Murphy was appointed pastor of St. Mary's parish, originally built on Cedar Street. The parish included the area of Bangor west of the Kenduskeag Stream, Hampden, Hermon, and Carmel. While St. Mary's was in the early stages of construction, Father Murphy engaged the auditorium of Bangor City Hall as a place of worship. When the church basement was completed, a temporary altar and seating were set up for Mass. The cornerstone of St. Mary's was laid in September 15, 1872 by Right Reverend D.W. Bacon, Bishop of Portland. The church was dedicated on December 8, 1872, by Right Reverend Bishop Lynch of Charleston, S.C.

Father Michael C. O'Brien succeeded Father Murphy in 1880. During his 21 years of pastorate, Fr. O'Brien built the rectory, installed the organ and built a school. During the years 1908-1933, stained glass windows were installed and a bell was installed in the tower.

Beginning in 1967, a major restoration was begun on St. Mary's. In 1972, the 100th Anniversary of St. Mary's was celebrated. In January of 1977, a fire extensively damaged the rectory. It took firefighters almost 6 hours to extinguish the blaze. But that fire was a mere foreshadowing of what would come a year later.

On February 3, 1978, in sub-zero temperatures, a young man set the fire that would destroy St. Mary's Church, a 105-year-old landmark. Remembered as one of the worst fires in the city's history, it would change the lives of many Bangor Catholics forever. Unharmed by the fire were the crucifix, the nave, the altar, sacred vessels, and a few of the stained glass windows. The pews were covered in a thick sheet of ice. The next day, Mass was held at the Bangor Auditorium, where a huge crowd gathered and the healing began.

On September 9, 1979, groundbreaking was held for the new St. Mary's Church on Ohio Street. Masses were celebrated at Dow Field during the construction of the new church. St. Mary's architecture is distinctly modern. The primary design captures the unmistakable lines of a tent (the hallmark of the ancient desert-dwelling nomads of the Holy Land).

On October 31, 1980, the first Mass was celebrated on the Vigil of All Saints. On December 14, 1980, Bishop Edward C. O'Leary [dedicated the new church](#) at an Ecumenical Service.

Today, the original St. Mary's crucifix hangs above the altar and the tower outside the main entrance supports the bell taken from the original St. Mary's steeple. Restored stained glass windows are installed in the chapel and sanctuary, as well as the parish office at St. John's Church.

Above extract from <https://stpaulbangor.me/our-churches>

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Below Extract from Book by Samuel Lane Boardman on Fr Michael O'Brien from Beenatavaun.

Descriptive Sketches of Six Private Libraries of Bangor, Maine

BY
SAMUEL LANE BOARDMAN

BANGOR:
PRINTED FOR THE AUTHOR
1900

<http://quod.lib.umich.edu/m/moa/ahn7485.0001.001/172?page=root;size=100;view=image;q1=brien>

<http://quod.lib.umich.edu/m/moa/ahn7485.0001.001/13?q1=brien&view=image&size=100>

A COLLECTION ON INDIANOLOGY.

UD ALIWISUHANGANUK WENE-
MANIT, HATCHI WEMITANKUS-
IT, HATCHI, WETCHI ULI NI-
WESKWIT.—NIALETCH.

"Gloria in Excelsis Deo," in the Language
of the Penobscot Indians. From Father
O'Brien's Abnaki Catechism.

<http://quod.lib.umich.edu/m/moa/ahn7485.0001.001/172?page=root;size=100;view=image;q1=brien>

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LIBRARY OF VERY REV. M. C.
O'BRIEN, V. G., P. R.



HERE are now so few people, even among special scholars of comparative philology, who are interested in the study of the Indian languages and dialects—languages fast disappearing from human use upon the earth—that it will

no doubt be a surprise to them to learn that more than 2,000 books and pamphlets have been published in this country in the various Algonquian languages. The aboriginal inhabitants of America speaking these languages covered a greater extent of country, perhaps, than those of any other of the linguistic stocks of North America, stretching from Labrador to the Rocky

Mountains, and from the Churchill river of Hudson bay to Pamlico sound in North Carolina. The literature of their languages is by far the greatest in extent of any of the stocks north of Mexico, and only equaled, if at all, by one south of that line—the Nahuatl. It is probable that every language of this vast family is on record in the printed page. In two, the Massachusetts and the Cree, the whole Bible has been printed, the former having been the first Bible printed upon the American continent. In two other Indian languages nearly the whole Bible has been printed, and portions of it in a number of others. In seven different languages extensive dictionaries of those languages have been printed; while in the same number grammars have been printed. Manuscript grammars also exist of four languages; and dictionaries of eight. Moreover in nearly every language of the vast Algonkin family prayer books, hymn books, tracts and scriptural texts have been printed; while in some primers, spelling books, readers and geographies have been printed. The late James Constantine Pilling's "Bibliography of the Algonquian Languages," published in 1891, extended to 2,245 titles, of

which 1,926 were those of printed books, and 319 of manuscripts, and occupied a volume of 624 closely printed double column pages, embellished by 82 plates of fac similes of title pages of the more important books described.

This brief note on Indian bibliography may well form an introduction to some account of the collection of works on Indianology, in the private library of Rev. Fr. Michael Charles O'Brien, V. G., of this city. While the collection is not extensive it is exceedingly curious as well as important, and is by far the largest private library on Indian dialects and books printed in the various Indian languages possessed by any student in Maine, if not in New England. In this sketch we shall speak only of books and manuscripts in the different Indian languages; not referring to Fr. O'Brien's large theological and general library which consists of a fine collection of works in rare editions and in fine bindings, relating not only to the literature of the Catholic church but to that of the various Protestant religions, and to general literature, philosophy, biography and history, ancient and modern.

The students of Indianology in this country have not been few, and one has only to recall the writings of Henry R. Schoolcraft and George Catlin to see how monumental have been their writings upon this subject. When it comes to the special study of the languages of the many tribes and families, the list of those students who have devoted a life time of study to this subject alone, would embrace such well known names as John Eliot, Jonathan Edwards, Roger Williams, E. B. O'Callaghan, Daniel G. Brinton, W. M. Beauchamp, John G. Shea and J. Hammond Trumbull—men who have won a national reputation in this specialty. To narrow the field down to students of our own state would be to mention a list embracing the names of Dr. N. T. True of Bethel, William Willis, the historian of Portland, and Rev. Edward Ballard, D. D., of Brunswick—all now deceased. Foremost among the men who have devoted a life-time to the study of the Abnaki language was that devoted Jesuit missionary, Rev. Fr. Sebastien Rasles. Other priests who have given much time to the study of the Indian languages are Rev. M. C. O'Brien, V.

G., of this city; Rev. Fr. Eugene Vetromile, and the late Rev. W. Ingraham Kip, D. D. Rufus King Sewall of Wiscasset, and Dr. W. Scott Hill and Hon. Charles E. Nash, of Augusta, must also be classed among Maine scholars who have made the study of Indian place names a specialty. One who has studied the Indian languages to any extent will at once tell us that it is only those who have made a long study of them from living among the Indians themselves, talking with them, observing their daily ways and manner of life, who have the most thorough and most accurate knowledge of the structure and practical uses of the same; the structure, inflection and terminations of the verbs, with the inflections of the nouns, and the particular shades of meaning of the words making up the vocabulary. Of course it will be seen that scholars like the most of those who have published works on the Indian languages, have studied them at second hand, basing their knowledge generally upon that foundation work of monumental labor, the Abnaki dictionary of Father Rasles.

Probably the only person in Maine now living who has studied the Indian lan-

guage while living among them, is Rev. Fr. Michael Charles O'Brien, of this city. This statement may also be put in a more comprehensive manner in this way: That Fr. O'Brien is no doubt the only person in New England who has done this, and one of the very few men now living in the entire country who has made the Indian languages a specialty from actual study among families and tribes of Indians.

Having been sent as a priest to the Penobscot Indians, inhabiting Indian island in Old Town, in 1877, Fr. O'Brien very soon found out that it was necessary for him to know their language in order to properly perform his religious ministrations among them. Consequently, with the consent of the town authorities, he was appointed a teacher of the public school, and there commenced his study of the native language from intercourse with the children. He would ask them the names of all common objects in their own language, and would make notes of every word and definition so given. This same method was followed with the older people of the village and continued during his residence of three years among them. The result was a large mass of the most valuable original notes upon the Indian

language of the Penobscots. These notes fill numerous note books of different sizes, number in all more than a dozen, and together embrace hundreds of pages. It was from this study and the vast mass of notes and facts gathered, that Fr. O'Brien became interested in the ancient language of the Abnaki—the oboriginal language of our state—and was led to prepare for the Maine Historical Society, his treatise on the etymology of the Abnaki noun. This was published in the collections of that society for 1887, Vol. IX, and was also issued separately in an author's limited edition for private distribution.

The publication of this treatise at once won a justly merited distinction for its author. He was elected a member of the society, and his studies in Indianology gave him the recognition of other learned societies, and individual students of the Indian languages and of comparative philology. He became a correspondent with them, authors sent him copies of their writings, and he commenced to collect, in a modest way, works relating to Indian languages—grammars, dictionaries and books in various languages, relating to the Indians of many parts of the coun-

try. Of course in the busy life which Fr. O'Brien has led in connection with his many parochial duties, he has had little opportunity for the continuance of this interesting and fascinating, yet difficult study; but at the same time he has never lost interest in the subject; and many half hours and moments of close application have been given to this fascinating study at intervals of his more serious and responsible duties.

Very naturally the first and by far the most important book in the Indian collection of Fr. O'Brien, and one upon which he based his studies of the Indian language is the "Dictionary of the Abnaki language in North America," by Rev. Sebastian Rasles, S. J. This was published by the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, at Cambridge, Mass., in 1883, in a volume of 574 double column pages. The original MS. of this work is a small quarto volume in Fr. Rasles' own handwriting. It was found after the fight at Norridgewock, Aug. 12, 1724, in which Fr. Rasles was killed by the English, among other papers, which were in his "strong box." The MS. is now one of the treasures in the library of Harvard university, but the original iron box

is in the cabinet of the Maine Historical society at Portland. One of the first tasks which Fr. O'Brien set himself about after having acquired a good knowledge of the Abnaki—Alnanbe, or Abenaki—language, was the making of an Index to Rasles' dictionary. This is a French-Indian index or a concordance and explanation of 8000 Indian words found in Rasles' book. It was a work of great labor and fills a large volume in manuscript. Another interesting MS. is a "Grammar Miquemaque" (or Micmac) made at Pleasant Point near Eastport, by Pere Louis Edmund Demillier, a priest to the Passamaquoddy Indians at that place and where he died, July 23, 1843. The author of the original dictionary of which Fr. O'Brien's is a copy, is not known, but was without doubt an early priest from Nova Scotia, who was sent among the Indians at Pleasant Point.

The copy in Fr. O'Brien's collection was made by Sister Scholastica, an educated Indian woman, at Old Town, in 1879.

In dictionaries, grammars, parts of the scriptures, prayer books, and catechisms, there are in Fr. O'Brien's library, among many others, the following works: Gram-

mar of the Ojibwa and Mohawk, by Jean Andre Couq, for years a missionary to the Indians at the Lake of Twin Mountains, Montreal, 1866; Grammar and Dictionary of the Otchipwe-English language by P. R. Bishop Baraga, Montreal, 1882; Lexique de la Langue Iroquoise, by Father Couq, Montreal, 1882; Dictionary of the Cree (Cris) Language, by Rev. Pere Alb. Lacombe, a missionary at St. Sulpice, Quebec, Montreal, 1874; History of the Abenakis, by L'Abbe J. A. Maurault, Sorel, 1866; Observation on the Language of the Muhhekaneew Indians, New Haven, 1788 reprinted by the Massachusetts Historical society, with notes by John Pickering, 1823; Indian Good Book, by Eugene Vetromile, S. J., (several editions); a nearly full set of the writings of that learned Indian scholar, the late John Hammond Trumbull, presented by the author, one of the most curious of which is a volume containing Forty Algonkin versions of the Lord's Prayer; Kauder's Catechism of Micmac Language, (in hieroglyphic), 1866, printed at Vienna, Austria, at the expense of the Austrian emperor, the author Christian Kauder having been an Austrian priest to the Indians in Ohio,

Louisiana and Pennsylvania between 1845-50; Roger Williams' "Key to the Language of America, or an Help to the Language of the Natives in that part of America called New England;" originally printed in 1643, and reprinted by the Narragansett club, edited by J. Hammond Trumbull, 1866; Indian Bibliography, by Thomas W. Field, 1873; Bible History in Algonkin, Montreal, 1859; Buk ov Djenesis (Genesis), in Micmac, 1857; Relation Obreege de Quelques Missions, by Fr. Martin, Montreal, 1852.

One of the rarest books in Fr. O'Brien's Indian collection, is a little 16 mo. of 70 pages, having the following title: "The Indian Prayer Book; compiled and arranged for the Benefit of the Penobscot and Passamaquoddy Tribes. Printed by order of the Right Rev. B. Fenwick, Bishop of Boston. Boston: Printed by H. L. Devereux." The original MS. of this work is in the library of Georgetown College, Washington, D. C. This book is not mentioned by Pilling in his Indian bibliography. Fr. O'Brien also has another copy of the MS. made in 1804. This book is the first one ever printed for the use of the Indians of Maine. It was by no means the first

book compiled and written for their instruction, for the earlier missionaries, after they had learned the language, prepared books of instruction for their successors of which the several rare manuscripts in Fr. O'Brien's possession are examples. It was through the efforts of Bishop Fenwick that a monument to Fr. Rasles was erected at Indian Old Point, Norridgewock, in 1833. In the library is an extensive collection of pamphlets relating to the various Indian languages. One of these is: "Indian Place Names in Northern Maine, with explanations derived from the Indians," by Lucius L. Hubbard, of which only a few copies were printed. One of the most rare numbers in this portion of the library is: "The Indian of New England and the Northeastern Province Vocabularies. Derived from Nicola Teueslls; Middletown, Conn., 1851." Nor should we omit mention of the valuable reports of the United States bureau of ethnology, in a long series; and the many government monographs relating to Indian antiquity and language. Fr. O'Brien is a subscriber to the new edition of the "Jesuit Relations and Allied Documents, 1610-1791;" the relations or reports of the Jesuit missionaries in New

France, edited by Reuben Gold Thwaites, secretary of the Wisconsin Historical Society, and now being published at Cleveland, Ohio. This will extend to between 60 and 70 volumes, 54 of which are already out and the publication of these volumes, both in the original French and in English, on opposite pages, is one of the most important enterprises in the interest of American history and scholarship that has ever been undertaken in this country. This work is also being received by the public library in this city, at the state library at Augusta, and by several scholars in Maine.

This enumeration gives but a few of the more important works in Fr. O'Brien's library, but it is sufficient to indicate a good idea of the treasures which it contains in the unique specialty to which it is devoted.

But the most interesting portion of Fr. O'Brien's collection is that embracing the exceedingly rare and precious manuscripts in his possession. One of the most valuable is the manuscript French-Alnaka dictionary made by Fr. Joseph Aubery, who was a priest to the Abnakis. This is the original manuscript of Fr. Aubery,

and is contained in a volume of 541 pages, in modern binding. Its title is "Dictionnaire Francois-Abnaquis." It is written in a clear, beautiful hand, and upon the last leaf, as legible as when first written, is the date when the work was finished, viz: "Aug. 18, 1715."

Father Aubery was born in France, March 10, 1674, and accompanied Fr. Bigot to the mission at Pentagoet, Acadia, where he lived a few years. He was a contemporary of Fr. Rasles. In 1709 he was ordered to the Indian village of Pierreville, P. Q., near the mouth of the St. Francis river, where he remained until his death which occurred in 1755, having been a priest for 55 years, and having lived 40 years after his dictionary was written. Fr. Aubery was very learned and wrote much, nearly always in the Abnaki language. During his long service as priest he made a collection of valuable manuscripts, which, with the registers of the missions were deposited in the First church of the Abnakis at St. Francis. Of this large collection all were destroyed by the burning of the church in 1759, with the exception of this manuscript dictionary, and a large book containing many hymns, motets, psalms and songs—which at the time of the burning of the church were in the hands of Fr. Virot. These two manuscripts have served greatly toward the history and language of the Abnaki people. They came into possession of Judge Charles Gill of Canada, who was a descendant of Americans captured and taken to Canada during the French wars, and by him were bound as they now appear,

in durable leather binding, appropriately lettered.

Another manuscript is a dictionary which is the reverse of that just described. It is an Abnaki-French dictionary, whereas the former is a French-Abnaki dictionary. It is incomplete but valuable, and embraces 928 pages.

Still another manuscript is "Index alphabeticus correspondens Sylvia vocum Uanbanakaeorum." In other words it is an Abenakis-Latin dictionary. It was made by Jean Baptist Nudenans who is supposed to have been an Indian instructed by the Jesuit fathers.

Another manuscript is a collection of sermons against the abuse of the calumet and the dance by the Indians. This is chiefly in French, although parts are in Latin and parts in Abnaki. Its author was Fr. Francois Eustache Lesueur, a missionary to the Abnakis from 1715 to his death in 1755. He also wrote a dictionary of Abnaki roots, and his manuscript contains words in the Penobscot, Souriquois, Delaware, Monhegan and Sankikani languages—thus showing his wide acquirements. This manuscript is to be printed in the Jesuit Relations now being published at Cleveland, Ohio.

The Sacraments, 1754, by Fr. Claudius Francis Virot, is another rare manuscript. This manuscript will also appear in the new edition of the Jesuit Fathers.

Claude Francis Virot, a French missionary, was born in France, Feb. 16, 1721, and died near Fort Niagara, in July, 1759. He became a Jesuit in 1738, and in 1750 was sent to Canada, where he labored for several years among the Abnaki Indians with great success. He was then sent to the Ohio river where he founded a mission among the Delawares at Sakunk, on the mouth of the Big Beaver. The influence that he was gaining over the tribe excited the jealousy of Pakanke, chief of the Wolf tribe, and he was forced to leave. He afterwards acted as chaplain to a body of French soldiers and was killed in his participation in an attempt to relieve Fort Niagara.

But the most valuable and important of all the rare manuscripts in Fr. O'Brien's possession is an ancient book, without title, (which is almost the only leaf missing from the entire 570 pages), which may be called a gradual service of the church at mass and vespers; containing the liturgy and prayers for the clergy and laity. This is in the neat, accurate and beautiful handwriting of Fr. Aubrey, being one of the two manuscripts saved from his large collection by the burning of the Abnaki church at

Pierreville in 1759. It contains the music, hymns and signs used in the service; with the Roman missals and breviary, translated into Abnaki. The Latin hymns are also found in it translated into Indian poetry of the same measure of the hymn. The Indians were taught to read and write by the missionaries, and some parts of this manuscript were written by the Indians themselves, as is shown from the crude and imperfect handwriting appearing in some places. The leaves of this book are thumbed and worn from much usage, and the volume is justly regarded as very precious.

In 1879 Fr. O'Brien printed "A Brief Catechism for the use of the Old Town Indians," a little pamphlet of eight pages, which is one of the curiosities of philology, a specimen of which is given in the accompanying plate of the Lord's prayer in the language of the Old Town Indians.

While examining this rare collection of printed books and manuscript relating mainly to the Indian languages—not to speak of those relating to the history of the American tribes—one is impressed with the vast work which the early Jesuit missionaries to the natives of this continent accomplished for the cause of

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PRIVATE LIBRARIES

history and language, to say nothing of their service for the spiritual and temporal welfare of the savages among whom they labored. These missionaries of so early a date as 1600 to 1740, were all scholars, informed in all the knowledge of their time. They were, beside spiritual guides, observing travelers, who noted all that was interesting in a new country, its rivers, trees, plants, animals, as well as the ways and customs of the natives and their manner of life, with records of their language—all of which have been most valuable as materials for history. Moreover, the devoted, self-sacrificing lives which they led among the Indians, deprived of all the comforts of civilization which they renounced on becoming missionaries, stamps them as among the heroes of the cross and the pioneers of a Christian world.

Fr. O'Brien has resided in Bangor for many years, where he is permanent rector of St. Mary's church. On Aug. 14, 1893, he was appointed Vicar General of the Bishop of Portland. He is a devoted priest of profound scholarship, and has a correspondence with many of the most eminent scholars, historians and philologists in the country. In 1898 he visited

Europe. His collection of works, which has been briefly outlined in this sketch, is one of the most rare and valuable in its specialty in the country; and scholars will be grateful that such provision has been made regarding it, that the entire collection will eventually be deposited in the perpetual keeping of the Maine Historical Society at Portland.

