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Johnnie Bread History

Peggy L. Roske

College of Saint Benedict/Saint John's University, proske@csbsju.edu

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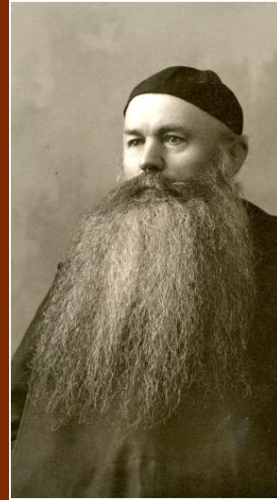
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A Historical “Bite” of Johnnie Bread

to note the centennial of

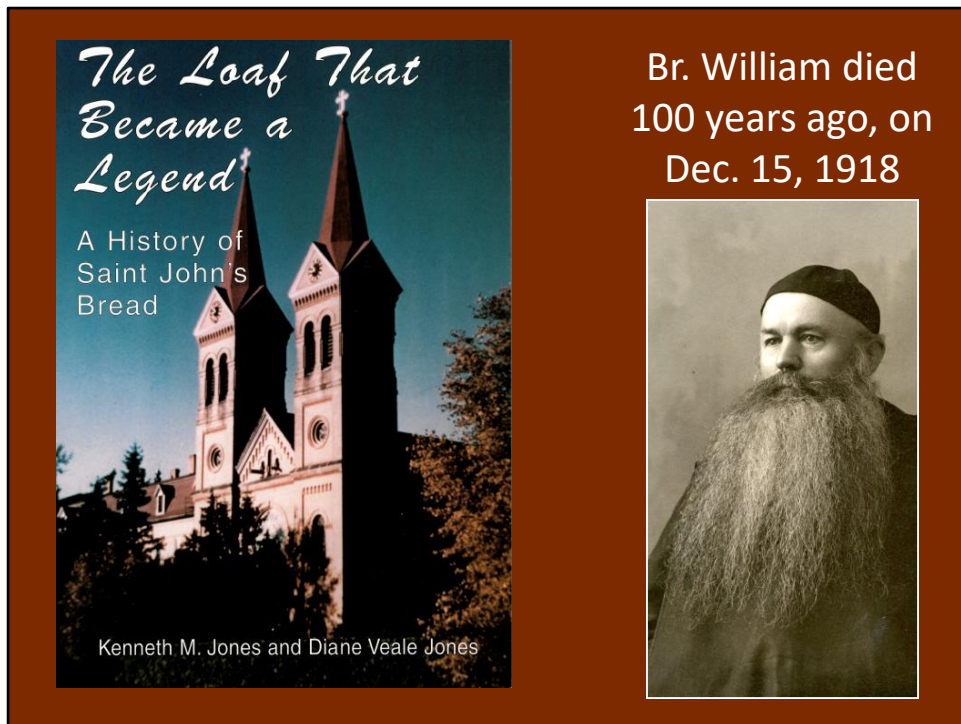
*The death of
the creator of...*

Br. William
Baldus, OSB



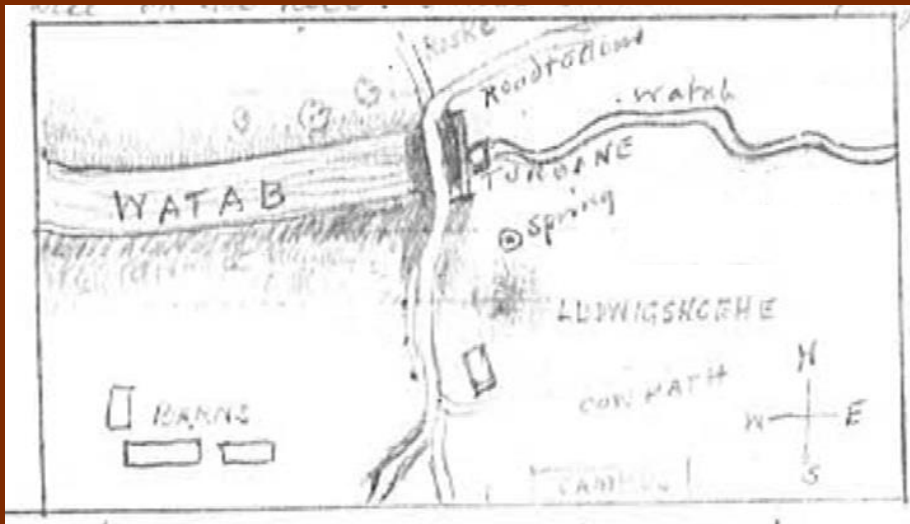
Cover of *The Loaf That Became A Legend: A History of Saint John's Bread* by Ken and Diane Veale Jones. SJU Archives.

Baldus photo and caption from p. 6 of book.



Cover of *The Loaf That Became A Legend: A History of Saint John's Bread* by Ken and Diane Veale Jones. SJU Archives.
Baldus photo and caption from p. 6 of book.

1868: the first mills are built on the Watab River

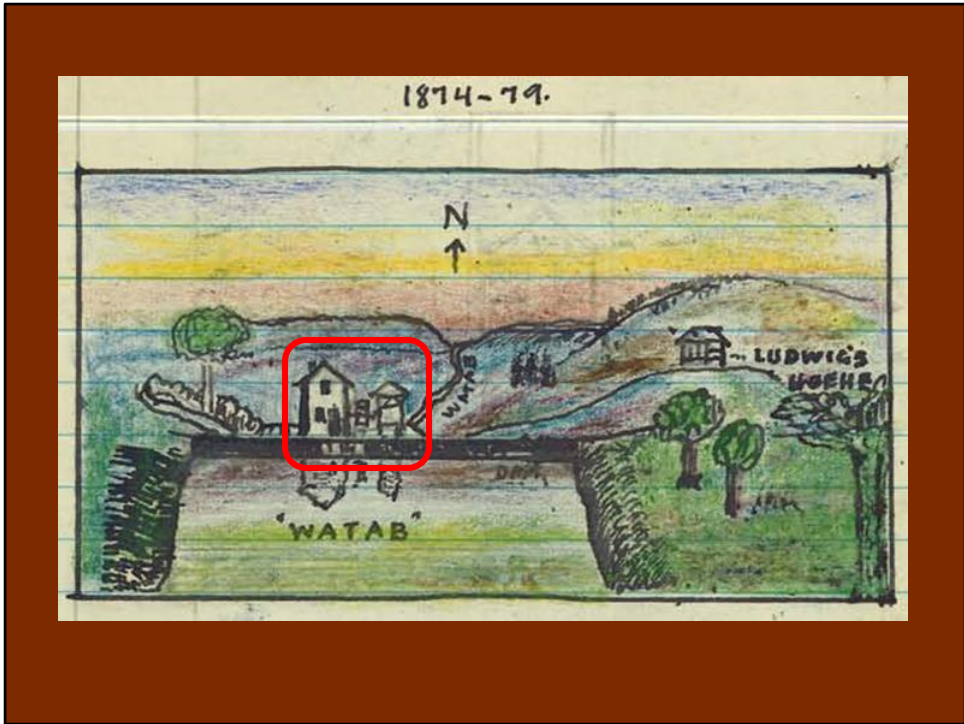


2571:13 (edited); sketch by Alexius Hoffmann OSB

Fire was a recurring threat; the mills repeatedly burned down.



O: ...Buildings ... Mills from SJAA



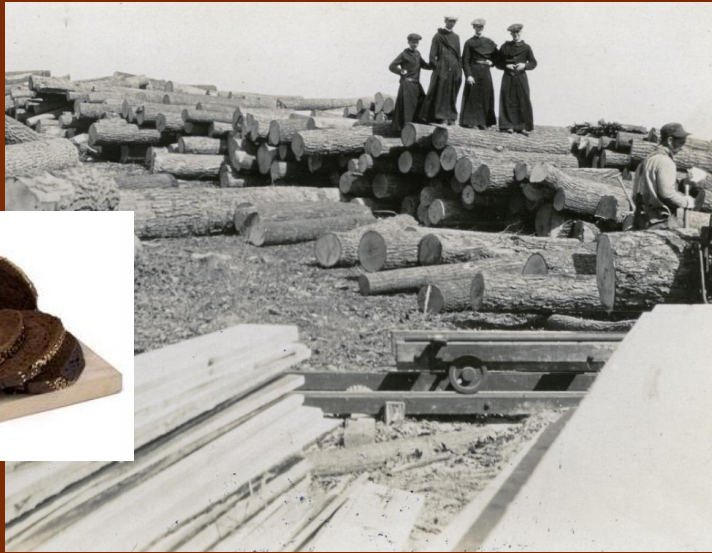
2571:13 sketch by Alexius Hoffmann, OSB





O: ...Buildings/Mills ... Mills from A Visual History ppt
Dates from [Buildings and Places](#),
<https://www.csbsju.edu/sju-archives/sjuhistory/sjubuildings>

There were two mills side by side: one a sawmill for lumber, the other a flour mill.



The original Johnnie bread had to be baked in a brick oven.

The loaves were 18" x 8", and the slices were 5/8" thick.


Worship & Work, p. 398

W & W p. 398, footnote 19: the original Johnnie bread had to be baked in a brick oven, the loaves were 18" x 8", and the slices were 5/8" thick.

LP007.JohnnieBread

LP013a.1913.Loggers

<http://www.thefreshloaf.com/node/34160/i-need-recipe-very-dark-bread-can-i-make-it-black>



The starting point for the old-world recipe was a type of *Schwarzbrot*—in the German language, a coarse “black bread” that some have compared to pumpernickel.

Brother William modified the original recipe somewhat with the addition of cracked wheat and other grains. Some have described the taste of this wheat-based dark bread as “nutty, grainy.”

W & W p. 398, footnote 19: the original Johnnie bread had to be baked in a brick oven, the loaves were 18” x 8”, and the slices were 5/8” thick.

LP007.JohnnieBread

LP013a.1913.Loggers

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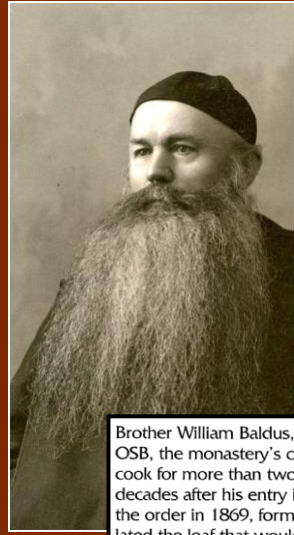
Boys who worked in the St. John's kitchen, about 1895



✠ BRO. WILLIAM BALDUS ✠

Brother William was found dead in his bed on Sunday morning December 15, 1918. The news was a surprise to some extent, for he had been about on the previous day and joined in the public exercises of the community. With him passes away one of the most familiar figures at St. John's. He was the senior lay brother, and had he lived a few months more, might have celebrated the golden jubilee of his admission to the novitiate.

He was born at Langenhahn in Nassau (diocese of Limburg) on June 6, 1844, served in the German army during the war of 1866, and two years later emigrated to the United States. In the spring of 1868 he reached what was then the abbey of St. Louis on the Lake—a solitary building of stone in the woods—and was given employment in the kitchen. The number of laybrothers was exceedingly



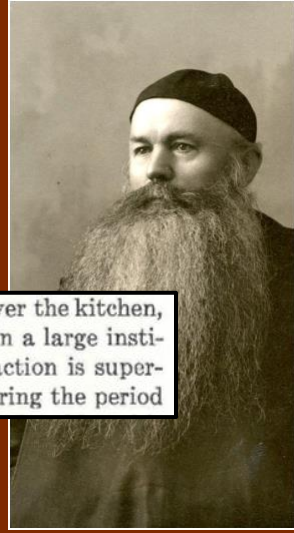
Brother William Baldus, OSB, the monastery's chief cook for more than two decades after his entry into the order in 1869, formulated the loaf that would become a legend. While monks and students praised him as a creative chef, local children knew him as a soft touch for cookies and other treats. Photo courtesy of SJU Archives.

Stones and Hills / Steine und Huegel/Reflections: St. John the Baptist Parish, 1875-1975, [part 1 \(pp. 60-71\)](#)

Baldus photo and caption from p. 6 of *The Loaf That Became A Legend: A History of Saint John's Bread* by Ken and Diane Veale Jones. SJU Archives.

Death notice from *Benedictine Forum*

<http://tcdm.csbsju.edu/digital/collection/SJUArchives/id/44826/rec/1>



For the space of twenty-five years he presided over the kitchen, one of the most important and difficult departments in a large institution. To say that he was capable and gave satisfaction is superfluous, for he was second to very few in popularity during the period

**“The best part of the old
Johnnie bread was the bits of
‘hair’ surprises in the recipe!”**

Stones and Hills / Steine und Huegel/Reflections: St. John the Baptist Parish, 1875-1975, [part 1 \(pp. 60-71\)](#)

Baldus photo and caption from p. 6 of *The Loaf That Became A Legend: A History of Saint John’s Bread* by Ken and Diane Veale Jones. SJU Archives.

Death notice from *Benedictine Forum*

<http://tcdm.csbsju.edu/digital/collection/SJUArchives/id/44826/rec/1>

Quote from the Abbey Archivist

Br WILLIAM BALDUS

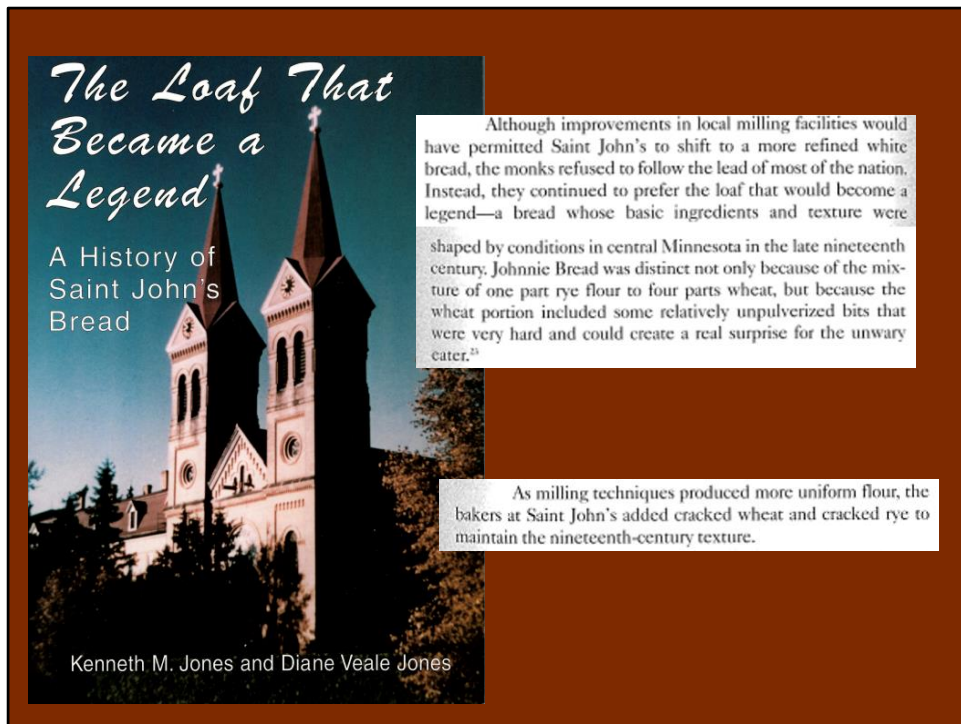
Date of Birth: 06/06/1844

Date of Death: 12/15/1918

Name	Section	Lot Row	Lot
Br WILLIAM BALDUS	Monastery Cemetery South Side	12	1



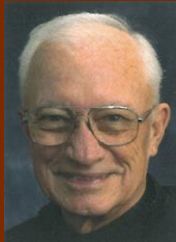
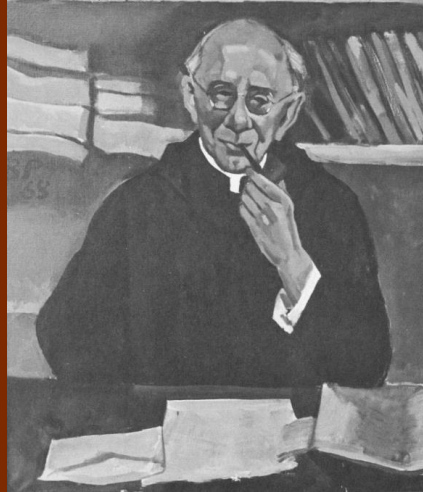
http://www.saintjohnsabbeycemetery.org/explore-the-cemetery/section/monastery_cemetery_south_side/



Cover of *The Loaf That Became A Legend: A History of Saint John's Bread* by Ken and Diane Veale Jones. SJU Archives.

Text from p. 4-5

Father Walter Reger, O.S.B. (1894-1971), erstwhile history professor and consummate university and alumni administrator (aka "Mr. Saint John's"), wanted to promote Johnnie Bread as something emerging from and intimately associated with Saint John's. He envisioned this hardy bread as a vehicle for fundraising, a source of financial aid and scholarships for students, and as a culinary connection for keeping in touch with alumni. During the 1960s, and continuing to this day, several campus clubs used sales of Johnnie Bread for fundraising.



Father Gordon Tavis, O.S.B., picked up where Father Walter left off. Thinking that Johnnie Bread sales might have a role in promoting student scholarships, he began new sales initiatives in the early 1970s.

Despite their combined efforts, however, their goal of a strong market revival and broad commercialization of Johnnie Bread over the long term was never realized.

Abbey Banner Spring 2016

Text from Abbey Banner Spring 2016 p.27 v. 16 n.1

<http://cdm.csbsju.edu/digital/collection/SJUArchives/id/47032/rec/46>

Wlater Reger image by Bela Petheo, Fall 1968 Alum Magazine cover



Abbey Banner Spring 2016 p.27 v. 16 n.1

<http://cdm.csbsju.edu/digital/collection/SJUArchives/id/47032/rec/46>

**ST. JOHN'S
BREAD**

© 1958 St. John's Abbey, Collegeville, Minnesota, U.S.A.

"The Loaf That Became a Legend"
The original recipe now adapted
for use by selected bakers...sold
at better stores...in **DARK** and
WHITE loaves.

Marketing of Johnnie Bread in the 1950s and 60s included postcards from Father Walter Reger alerting friends and alumni that Saint John's Bread was available "at your nearest food market."

Abbey Banner Spring 2016

Abbey Banner Spring 2016 p.27 v. 16 n.1

<http://cdm.csbsju.edu/digital/collection/SJUArchives/id/47032/rec/46>

By the numbers:

- 600-800 pounds of dough/week
- 300-400 loaves each week
- 25,000 loaves each year



Mr. Rich Ruprecht (foreground) and Mr. Dave Schoenberg oversee another batch of Johnnie Bread.

Abbey archives

Major bread sales coincide with:

Abbey Banner Spring 2016

- Johnnie homecoming
- Commencement
- school breaks
- major feast days like Christmas & Easter

Abbey Banner Spring 2016 p.26 v. 16 n.1

<http://cdm.csbsju.edu/digital/collection/SJUArchives/id/47032/rec/46>

Recent chief
Johnnie Bread
bakers

1960-1983:

Clem Meyer

1983-1989:

Adrian Weber

1989-2007:

Rich Ruprecht



Mr. Rich Ruprecht (foreground) and Mr. Dave Schoenberg oversee another batch of Johnnie Bread.

Abbey Banner Spring 2016

Abbey Banner Spring 2016 p.25-26 v. 16 n.1

<http://cdm.csbsju.edu/digital/collection/SJUArchives/id/47032/rec/46>

*Baked from a centuries-old
recipe brought by the Benedictines from Bavaria...*

ST. JOHN'S BREAD

*famous loaf of hearty
natural goodness*

For the first time you can enjoy famous St. John's
Bread. It's a hearty, satisfying loaf, baked today
for you just as it's been baked for centuries
by the Benedictines. Try the traditional unbrowned
loaf or the firm, new white loaf.
St. John's Bread is fresh... delicious.
Reach for it today.

*Enjoy St. John's
White Bread, too!*

Another fine product of your Sunbeam baker

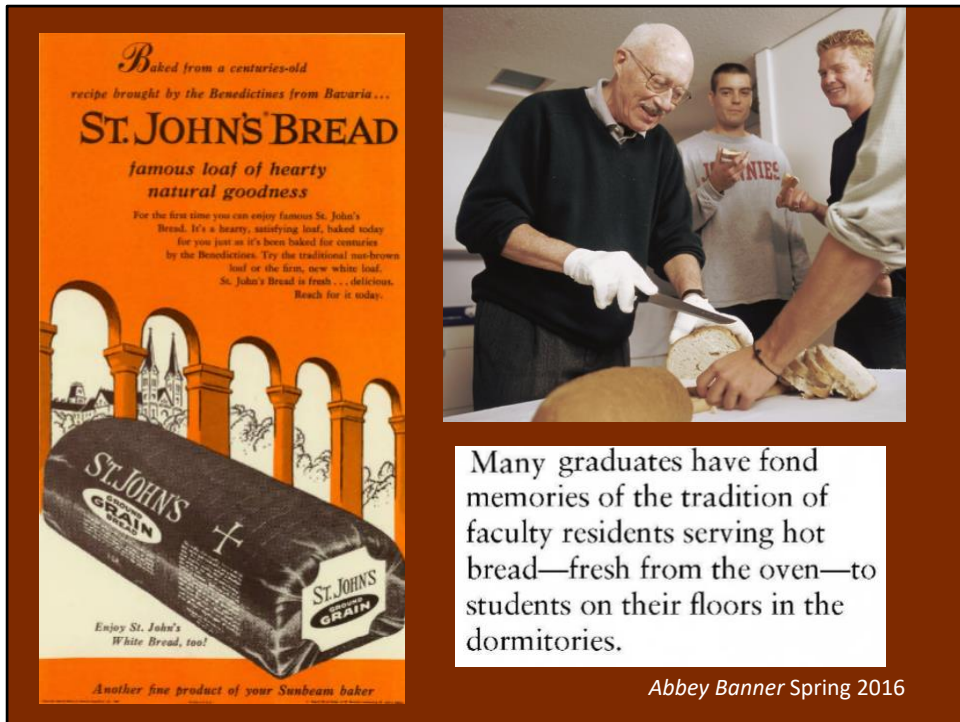
the hot bread—with
honey, jam, and peanut butter—
in the student dorms is still a
signature of living at Saint John's

Many graduates have fond
memories of the tradition of
faculty residents serving hot
bread—fresh from the oven—to
students on their floors in the
dormitories.

Abbey Banner Spring 2016

Abbey Banner Spring 2016 p.27 v. 16 n.1 (quotes on p. 26)

<http://cdm.csbsju.edu/digital/collection/SJUArchives/id/47032/rec/46>



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Abbey Banner Spring 2016

Abbey Banner Spring 2016 p.27 v. 16 n.1 (quote on p. 26)

<http://cdm.csbsju.edu/digital/collection/SJUArchives/id/47032/rec/46>

Fr. Hilary Thimmesh and students, photo in SJU Archives: Bread slicing 2003.09.011.tif

The Loaf that became a Legend

ST. JOHN'S BREAD

Now available on selected grocers' shelves
from Coast to Coast

California	Nebraska
Colorado	New Hampshire
Illinois	New York
Indiana	North Carolina
Iowa	Ohio
Maine	Pennsylvania
Michigan	Texas
Minnesota	Washington
Missouri	West Virginia
Montana	Wisconsin

Alumni support of St. John's Bread has been overwhelming. So much so that we feel you are greatly responsible for the commercial success of this product. With each loaf you buy you make a contribution to your Alma Mater.

PLEASE ADDRESS ANY INQUIRIES CONCERNING ST. JOHN'S BREAD TO:
ALUMNI OFFICE, ST. JOHN'S UNIVERSITY

1961 ad

Ad from SJU_Alumni_Magazine 1961 July v.1n.2p.1
 Jack Eagle as Br. Dominic in Johnny Bread ads, PC06 103 shelf 3 v.1 p.36
 O:\Archives\SJUArchives\Images\Misc\Johnnie Bread



Actor Jack Eagle, "Brother Dominic" in ads for St. John's Bread, also posed with Coach John Gagliardi.



ST. JOHN'S BREAD
from a centuries-old recipe



FRESH-BAKED BY ZINSMASER

Available soon
at your Red Owl store—
ST. JOHN'S FROZEN
BREAD DOUGH

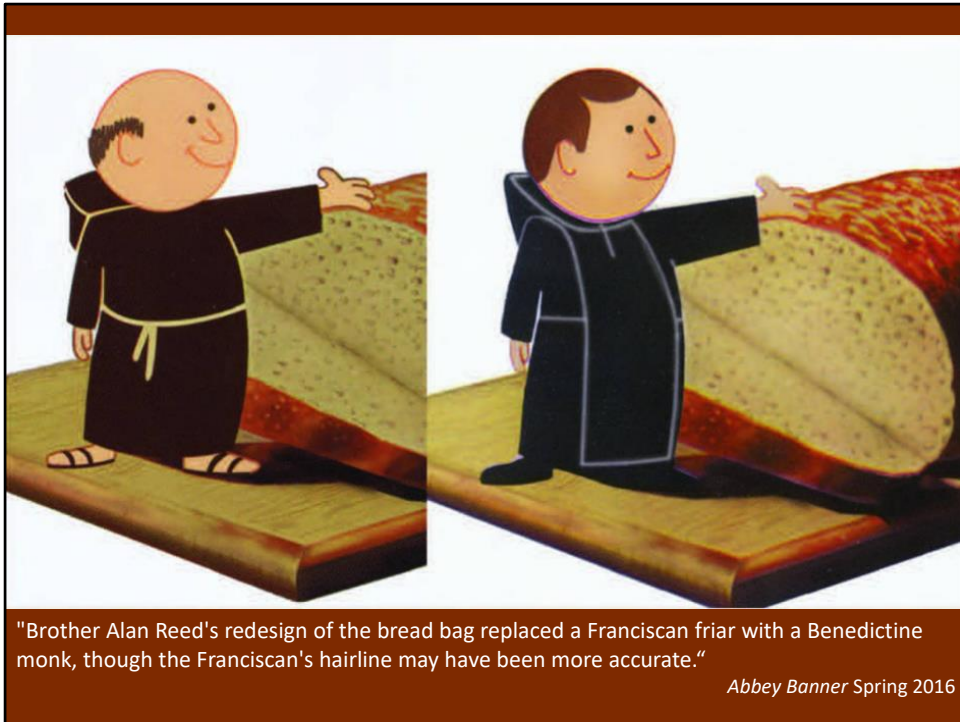
Jack Eagle as Br. Dominic with John Gagliardi PC06 103 shelf 3 v.1 p.37
Ad from 1965 11 27 NAIA Playoff Booklet p.24



Left image from the back of book, *The Loaf That Became a Legend*

Ad from SJU_Alumni_Mag 1961 July v.1n.2p.1

Photo with hands by Paul Vincent Niebauer OSB IMAG0255 20130417 by PV Niebauer

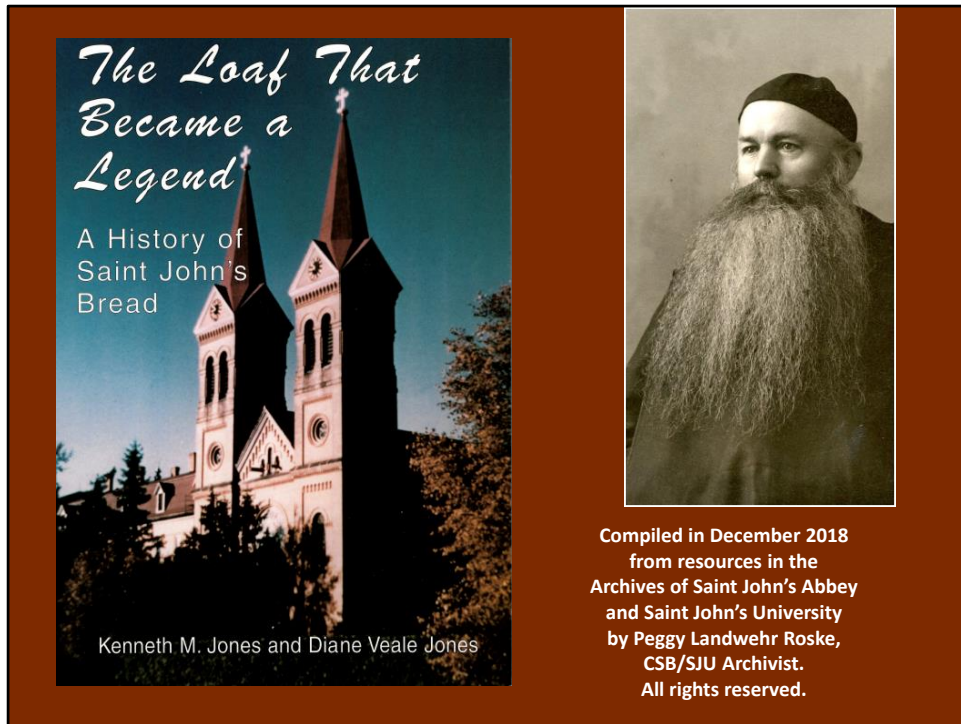


"Brother Alan Reed's redesign of the bread bag replaced a Franciscan friar with a Benedictine monk, though the Franciscan's hairline may have been more accurate."

Abbey Banner Spring 2016

Abbey Banner Spring 2016 p.27 v. 16 n.1

<http://cdm.csbsju.edu/digital/collection/SJUArchives/id/47032/rec/46>



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