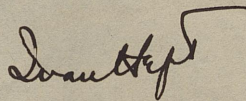


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Amazingly coincidental as these happenings are, the Parson has long since learned rather to call such things Providential.

The Parson, alias

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Ivan Heft". The signature is written in a cursive style with a prominent flourish at the end.

P.S. - The writer counts
3351 words in the
manuscript.

The Rev. Ivan Heft, Pastor,
Bethany Lutheran Church,
407 Evelyn Avenue,
Louisville, Kentucky.

REMOVE NOT THE ANCIENT LANDMARK

By Ivan Heft

In early 1929 a new Parson was rummaging through an old cupboard of a little Church in Louisville, Kentucky. One usually finds such interesting things in old Church cupboards. What would this cupboard yield? But the search went on, and nothing more exciting than yellowed Sunday School records was being unearthed, and the Parson was becoming disappointed. There now remained only a final miscellany of papers. And when the Parson lifted them there lay two books!

It was evident from the style ^{of} ~~and~~ binding that the books were record books, and the condition of the leather indicated that they were very old. Could they be a hundred years old? the Parson excitedly wondered. And hurriedly dropping to one knee and supporting the books ~~on~~ the other, he opened the topmost book.

"Baptisms" was inscribed at the top of the page that lay open. One "Napolion, child of Alfred & wife Phebe, borne May 30th, 1835" was baptized June 21st, 1835. For a moment the Parson wondered at the omission of the surname, but in the same moment, being Kentucky-born, he wondered whether this could be the record of a darkey slave baptism. Yes! For there, after recording the further baptism on the same date of little "Synthia, child of Syrus & wife Mariah", was the notation: "These are slaves, belonging to the estate of Amos Smith, dec."

For more than two hours the Parson remained in his strained position, poring over the newly found treasure. The books were the records of an old Church in Nelson County, Kentucky. Evidently the Church had ~~not~~ been ~~far~~ ^{near} from the county seat of Bardstown, and that meant that it was not far from the old Rowan Home where Stephen Collins Foster was a guest when he was inspired to write "My Old Kentucky Home". Here then

was a Church, long antedating the writing of the immortal composer's masterpiece, whose folk lived the life that the deathless song *portrayed* ~~portrayed~~.

In those early hours with the priceless books the Parson got a vivid mental picture of the life of the old Church, and that picture was intensified with his living in those books for coming weeks and months. There was the relationship of the darkey slaves to their masters. Not only were tiny slave babies brought to their baptisms, but so ~~also~~ also were adult slaves. Indeed, in the earliest baptismal record, of the year 1818, Silas and Phoebe, "servants of Amos Smith," were listed. Doubtless this was the "Phebe" who became the mother of little "Napolion". And these darkeys came to Church with their masters, and apparently trod with them the same way of salvation. For at "a protracted meeting comenced on the 20th of May 1843" there was "received in full conection of the Church.....also a culered man belonging to the estate of George Kurtz sr. Decd Named Daniel." Nor were these dusky members immune from congregational discipline. For after the name of Lewis Christopher's Jane is noted "Dismissed", and then "receivd again". These darkeys communed with their masters at the same Table of the Lord. And when they fell into their ~~eternal~~ *last eternal last* sleep they were brought to the Church as were their masters, there their funerals were "preached", and ~~then~~ their mortal remains were laid gently to rest in the old churchyard, to lie with their loved white folks until all be called to the resurrection of the just.

Of especial import were the communion records of the critical years when the War between the States was being fought. Nelson County had its representation in the Congress of the Confederate States of America. Yet during that ~~War~~ that was to bring them freedom from bondage, these darkeys showed that they were bound to their masters by a stronger and holier bond, and as had been their wont in years past they still came

to the same Lord's Supper with their owners. So also did they continue in years after the War, but with now ^{with} a difference. Before and during the War they were listed as possessions. It was Hays' David, and Bard's Mary, and Harvey's Allen. But after the War they are listed in their own surnames, and the surnames are those of their former owners! Hays' David becomes David Hays. Bard's Mary becomes Mary Bard. And of all the darkies in the old Church there was only one who did not take the surname under which he was listed as a possession. Harvey's Allen became Allen Bard. Could it be, the Parson wondered, that Allen had formerly belonged to the Bards and out of an old affection had taken their name in preference to that of his present owner? Later, prompted by the observation that the names of Harvey's Allen and Bard's Mary ~~were~~ always appeared together in the communion lists and that both were always present or absent together, the Parson surmised that they were man and wife. And this ~~was~~ was eventually verified. The Harvey's had sold their Allen to the Bards, and he should have become Bard's Allen. But everybody still called him Harvey's Allen, and ~~his~~ his name was carried in the Church records until emancipation brought surnames to himself and wife.

Out of the records one pieced the story of the building of an old brick Church. The Pastor of that building must have been a go-getter! Three weeks after his coming, the congregation ^{solemnly} pronounced its old log building "uncomfortable". In four more weeks a building fund was pledged to the amount of \$261.12 $\frac{1}{2}$, not quite 99% of the actual cost of the prospective building. The next five months were evidently given to the gathering of materials; ^{and must be carried for bricks.} for darkey slaves must carry mud for ^{they must be moulded + burned.} the bricks, and then shape and burn them. But at last, on Sunday, August 11th, 1833, a congregational meeting decided that there be another congregational meeting at 8 o'clock the next morning to tear down the old Church and ^{make use} of such materials as would not be wanted toward erecting the new church." And the record of August 12th duly

states that "the congregation met according to appointment. The old house was first taken down, and then, those materials above specified, were exposed to publick vendue, - but, did not sell"! On October 23rd the cornerstone was laid. And on the following May 4th the new Church was "dedicated to the triune God", ~~###~~ its two "building superintendents" reporting that not one ^{fraction of a} cent was owing to any contractor or laborer.

The congregation now turned its attention toward a "snake rail fence, properly staked and ridered", and many pledges of "100 rails and 22 stakes" were made, while others gave money toward the ironware for the gates. And a cast-iron wood-burning stove was purchased. There being a ^{"balance"} balance of \$16.31 $\frac{1}{2}$ in the treasury, and a special collection having brought in \$6.69 $\frac{3}{4}$, the congregation was able to expend the necessary \$19.64 for the stove.

Munificent were the salaries received ^{of} in those days. In 1844 the sexton received \$3.75 for his year's labors. The Mexican War must have brought prosperity, for in 1849 the wage was \$8. Post-war depression then evidently set in, those days when

"Hard times come a-knockin' at the door,

Then my old Kentucky home, good-night!"

for in 1852 the sum had dropped to \$7. But 1854 and 1855 brought rising tide, and respectively paid the faithful sexton \$9 and \$9.08.

^{Strange} ~~Puzzling~~ at first sight was the numbering in the communion records. Of the forty-eight communicants of September 26th, 1835, the list begins as follows:

1. Jemima Lutz.
3. Jn. Weller et uxor.
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In later years the same Pastor simplifies his records by substituting

"& Wife" for "et uxor". ^{Someone} Did ~~some~~ ^{perhaps} ~~portray~~ his Latinity?

Many are the contributions to orthodoxy ^{perhaps} by the old recorders! ~~There~~
 Pricilla, Lidia, Jamimah, Siras, Cate - and Catie, Rachel, and the
 above-mentioned Phebe, Syrus and Synthia are chief among many. Mr.
 George Hays, his slave Captain, and a submerged apostrophe all suffer
 in a statement concerning "one coulererd man of George Hays's Named Capton."
 Casander - alias Cassandra, Lavenia, ^{and} Hecter, Artemisia and Fidalia show
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Mute tragedy stalks between the lines of the records. A Pastor is
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For the historically minded there ^{were} ~~were~~ ^{white} choice morsels in the old
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 records. There were the circuit-riding Henkels of New Market, Virginia,
 who each year rode into Ohio, then down into Kentucky and Tennessee,
 and finally back home through the Carolinas; preaching, baptizing,
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~~But~~ But what were the records doing in Bethany Church of Louisville? How came they there instead of in the archives of Synod? A search of old minutes revealed that Synod had, a quarter of a century ago, entrusted the care of the old Church to the Louisville congregation. There was a Church in Nelson County then. But now it was no more. And since the depression was on, and a ninety mile round trip cost money, the Parson did not go to Nelson County to investigate. But he loved the old Church, and he vowed that some day he would find out where it had stood, and he would purchase near by a wee parcel of ground and erect a tablet to the memory of the old congregation and its old brick Church. The Parson soon traced the life of the congregation back to 1795, three years from the birth of Kentucky as a State. Doubtless it was even older. What a pity that it must die!

Slightly more than four years after the finding of the records an intimate friend asked the Parson, "Have you ever heard of St. Paul's Lutheran Church of Nelson County?" And without giving opportunity for ^{reply} an answer he went on with his story. Six days ^{ago} previous a young lady in his office ^{over} heard him speak the word "Lutheran", and paused to tell him that she had been baptized in a Lutheran Church...No, not in Louisville; in Nelson County...Yes, there is a Church there, a very old one. ~~And~~ ^{low} And the friend told the Parson ^{that} on the Sunday immediately following, the young lady and he went for dinner to the young lady's sister who lived near the Church, and thence to the Church itself. And neighborhood folk said that it was a hundred years old! Then ~~did~~ ^{said} the Parson ~~tell~~ his friend what he knew of St. Paul's Lutheran Church of Nelson County. And he concluded, "Please tell Miss Katie to write her sister that she will have two guests for dinner this coming Sunday also." ^{And into the small room he told his friend}

The dinner ~~that~~ was set before the Parson and his ~~friend~~ was all that Kentucky hospitality could provide. But the Parson's thoughts were

on a building a half mile away. The friend had said that it was falling into decay. What would it look like? At long last the dinner was over, and the Parson walked the road that for twelve decades had been called Lutheran Lane. Soon he saw a roof gleaming through the trees, and never was pilgrim of old in his first enraptured gaze upon the Eternal City more stirred than the Parson. When he entered the ancient gate a Voice within him said, "The place whereon thou standest is holy ground." And when he stood within the ruined Church he saw not so much the gaping holes in the roof, nor the sunken floor, nor the fallen altar, nor the ^{that} nests where the birds had built ~~####~~ in fulfillment of Scripture. There was where those darkies had ~~met~~ met for their baptism. There was where the Pastor-Colonel Lehmanowsky had stood. Could that ~~####~~ be the stove bought in the fall of 1835? And hurriedly the Parson noted that there was no slave gallery. So the darkies had sat on the same floor with their masters. Others were with the Parson, but he bowed his head and gave thanks for the old Church. "Remove not the ancient landmark," welled up within him. And he vowed that now, instead of buying a parcel of ground to erect a monument, he would bend every energy to restoring this most glorious monument. Meanwhile, rumor had spread through the neighborhood and a crowd was gathering. Without the Parson's prompting it, someone asked whether there couldn't be preachin'. And while the congregation sat on rich bluegrass, in cool shade and beside century-old tombstones, the ^{would they} eternal Gospel was once more proclaimed on the sacred ground.

On the way back to Louisville the Parson's friend reached in his pocket, ~~and said~~, "I am selfish enough to want to be the first to give toward the restoration of the old Church," ^{he said.} The following Sunday the Parson told his Bethany folk of the finding of the old Church, of their twenty-five year old obligation thereto, and of the dollar already given. What Bethany congregation gave was mostly in pennies and nickels, for those depression days were bitter. But when the offering was counted, and a

few pennies added, the Parson could announce, "We have ~~\$~~.00 toward restoring the old Church." And ~~then~~ he added, "One hundred years ago ^{Friday} the old congregation decided to tear down its log building. One hundred years later we, to whom its care is committed, take up the first general offering to restore the building that was planned."

Then came the Centennial of the Cornerstone-laying. How providential that the old building had been discovered just in time - less than three months beforehand! So, on an Indian summer Sunday in late October such as Kentucky alone can give, a long caravan of automobiles set out from Louisville on the First Annual Pilgrimage to the old shrine. Some six hundred folk from Louisville made the journey, and Nelson and adjoining counties swelled the throng. The Parson showed them the old record books. He showed the receipt for the dressed lumber that went into the Church a hundred years ago, itemized in shillings per hundred feet and totaling "\$24.98 ^{3/4} ~~1/2~~". There was the receipt of one Peter Bugher "for bildin th luteran meetin Hous in full"! There was the report of the building superintendents that the building cost \$265.06, which cost would have been more than \$3,000.00 in 1933. There was the old building fund pledge list, some of the pledges being ^{settled} paid in merchandise, and one pledge being marked "paid with two old hats"! And the congregation sang, "I Love Thy Zion, Lord," and it gave a century offering. And the money was used toward restoring the roof on the Church.

Still the Parson was not satisfied. He wanted to find a surviving member of the old congregation. But diligent inquiry in the neighborhood and advertising in The Kentucky Standard of Bardstown brought only disappointment. One day a neighbor to the Church said, "Go to Aunt Josie's on Short Eighth Street in Louisville. Grandma Elizabeth Wimsatt is with her now. Maybe she is still a member." And with stark simplicity she added, "In September when her husband was buried, she cried, and asked them to lead her to the Church so that she could put her hand on it once

more before she died."

The Parson found Grandma, lovely in her gray hair and with the serenity that the blindness of old age brings. Grandma was "proud" to see the preacher. Emphatically she affirmed that she never had been and never could be a member of any other Church. She joined the Church when she was nineteen or twenty, and she was born in '47. Her maiden name was Shehon. The Parson went home and looked at the old records. And once more his heart sank. For no Elizabeth Shehon was recorded as joining in the "sixties. The only Shehon of that period was a Rebecca, confiemed on November 18, 1866. Of all disappointments this climax was the bitterest. But suddenly the Parson sprang up from his desk. He cranked his Model T and hurried back to ShorthEighth Street. "Grandma," he asked, "what is your full maiden name?" And Grandma replied, "Rebecca Elizabeth Shehon"!

So it came to pass that on December 23rd, 1933, there sat with Grandma her daughter and granddaughter and great-grandson, and also the Parson with a lawyer friend. The Parson had explained his idea to Grandma, and her answer had been to shed tears of joy. And now the lawyer was reading his document whereby the old Nelson County congregation and the younger Louisville congregation would be legally merged, and the property of both become the property of the merged congregation. Thus also would the life of both live on in the merged congregation. Carefully the lawyer read, and carefully Grandma listened. When he finished reading, the lawyer said, "Grandma, by law I must ask you if you understand what it is that you are about to sign." Grandma cleared her throat. "Yes, I know what it means. It means that my husband's grave will be taken care of and so will mine when I die. And my Church will be restored and kept, and there will again be preaching in it." With choking voice the Parson read the eighty-fourth Psalm. The lawyer offered a prayer wrought with emotion. And then the daughter and granddaughter witnessed

Grandma's signature, the former writing the name and the latter guiding the aged hand in making its cross. And the tiny great-grandson looked on in earnest wonder.

The next night the Bethany Christmas carolers sang to Grandma. Proudly she explained to her neighbors, "They're from my Church." And at the Midnight Service that followed the caroling, Bethany congregation was told that the merger that it had voted was now consummated, and the congregation at once took action setting aside for future time the Sunday nearest November 18th as a day of special thanksgiving for the Providence that, through Grandma Wimsatt, had preserved for ~~an~~ unbroken posterity the life of Kentucky's historic Lutheran Church.

No, the old Church is not yet completely restored. But some day its walls will again resound with the proclamation of the faith of the fathers who reared their walls in faith. Some day the altar, beneath which a former Pastor lies buried, will be restored. Some day a monument in the corner of the churchyard where the old slaves lie buried will commemorate those who loved their earthly masters dearly and their heavenly Master yet more. Some day the window over the altar will portray a darkey slave kneeling for his baptism, the master ^{with} ~~who stands~~ ^{standing} his sponsor, and the Pastor ^{Aden W. Wimsatt} who administers the sacrament, and supremely the Saviour Who redeemed him.

^{the massive foundation stones lie firm as the day they were laid, and}
~~In the~~ meanwhile the ~~old walls~~ ^{old walls} stand straight and true as in the ~~days~~ ^{days} when they were built. The old records supplement the tales that the ~~old~~ tombstones tell. And Grandma Wimsatt knows that as long as she lives, the Bethany carolers will come to her before the Midnight Service of Christmas Eve, through storm and blizzard if need be, and that the Parson will unflinchingly bring her Christmas communion the following morning.

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Of especial import were the communion records of the critical years when the War between the States was being fought. ^{When Crumby had its representation in the Congress of the So. Conf.} ~~Yet~~ during that War that was to bring ^{them} ~~them~~ freedom from bondage, these darkeys showed that they were bound to their masters by a stronger and holier bond, and as had been their wont in years past they still came to the same Lord's Supper with their owners. So also did they continue in years after the War, but ^{with} ~~with~~ now a difference. Before and during the War they were listed as possessions. It was Hays' David, and Bard's Mary and Harvey's Allen. But after the War they are listed in their own surnames, and the surnames are those of their former owners! Hays' David becomes

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In later years the same Pastor simplifies his records by substituting "a wife" for "et uxor".

Many are the contributions to orthoepy by the old recorders! ^{cupped from} Siras, Louiza, ^{Jamimah,} Lidia, ^{and Cate} Pricilla, Cate, Rachel, and the above-mentioned ^{Syrus} Phebe and Synthia are chief among many. Mr. George Hays, his slave Captain, and a submerged apostrophe all suffer in a statement concerning "one coulererd man of George Hase,s Named Capton." "Casander" - alias Cassandra, "Lavenia", "Hetter", Artemisia and Fidelia show a smattering of classical background, while Mahala, Lucinda and Belinda tell their own tale.

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~~Almost~~ Slightly more than four years after the finding of the records an intimate friend asked the Parson, "Have you ever heard of St. Paul's Lutheran Church of Nelson County?" And without giving opportunity for an answer, he ^{with his story} went on ^{before} and on. Six days ^{previous} a young lady in his office heard him speak the word "Lutheran", and paused to tell him that she had been baptized in a Lutheran Church. No, not in Louisville; in Nelson County. Yes, there is a Church there, a very old one. And the friend told the Parson that on the Sunday immediately following, the young lady and he went for dinner to the young lady's sister who lived near the Church, and thence to the Church itself. And neighborhood folk ^{said} that it ^{was} a hundred years old! Then did the Parson tell his friend what he knew of St. Paul's Lutheran Church of Nelson County! And he concluded, "Please tell Miss Katie to write her sister that she will have two guests for dinner this coming Sunday also."

The dinner that was set before the Parson and his friend was all that Kentucky hospitality could provide. But the Parson's thoughts were on a building a half mile away. The friend had said that it was falling into decay. What would it look like? At long last the dinner was over, and the Parson walked the road that for twelve decades had been called Lutheran Lane. ^{he saw} Soon a roof gleaming through the trees, and never was pilgrim of old in his first enraptured gaze upon the ~~eternal~~ City more stirred than the Parson. When he entered the ancient gate a Voice within him said, "The place whereon thou standest is holy ground." And when he stood within the ruined Church his own

heart sang, "How lovely are Thy dwellings, O Lord of hosts." he saw not so much the gaping holes in the roof, nor the sunken floor, nor the fallen altar, nor the nests that the birds had built in fulfillment of Scripture. There was where those darkies had knelt for their baptisms. There was where the Pastor-Colonel Lehmanowsky had stood. Could that be the stove bought in the fall of 1835? And hurriedly the Parson noted that there was no slave gallery. So the darkies had sat on the same floor with their masters. Others were with the Parson, but he bowed his head and gave thanks for the old Church. "Remove not the ancient landmark," welled up within him. And he vowed that now, instead of buying a parcel of ground to erect a monument, he would bend every energy to restoring this most glorious monument. Meanwhile, rumor had spread through the neighborhood and a crowd was gathering. Without the Parson's prompting it, someone asked whether there couldn't be preachin'. And while the congregation sat on rich ^{blue grass} grass, in cool shade and beside century-old tombstones, the eternal Gospel was once more proclaimed on the sacred ground.

On the way back to Louisville the Parson's friend reached in his pocket and said, "I am selfish enough to want to give be the first to give toward the restoration of the old Church." On the following Sunday the Parson told his Bethany folk of the finding of the old Church, of their twenty-five year old obligation thereto, and of the dollar already given. What Bethany congregation gave was mostly in pennies and nickels, for these depression days were bitter. But when the offering was counted, and a few pennies added, the Parson could announce, "We have \$5.00 toward restoring the old Church." And then he added, "One hundred years ago today the old congregation decided to tear down its old log building. One hundred years later we, ^{to whom its care is committed,} take up the first general offering to restore the building that was planned."

^{Then} Three months later came the Centennial of the Laying of the

Cornerstone. How providential that the old building had been discovered
~~just in time~~ ^{- see how 3 months beforehand they so,} ~~So~~ on an Indian summer day in late October such as
 Kentucky alone can give, a long caravan of automobiles set out from
 Louisville on the First Annual Pilgrimage to the old shrine. Some
 600 folk from Louisville made the journey, and Nelson and adjoining
 counties swelled the throng. The Parson showed them the old record
 books. He showed the receipt for the dressed lumber that went into
 the Church a hundred years ago, itemized in shillings per hundred feet
 and totaling "\$24.98 $\frac{3}{4}$ ". There was the receipt of one Peter Bugher
 "for bildin th luteran meetin Hous in full"! There was the report
 of the building superintendents that the building cost \$265.06, which
 cost would have been more than \$3,000.00 in 1933. There was the old
 building fund pledge list, some of the pledges being paid in merchandise,
~~one in leather~~, and one pledge of \$2.00 being marked "paid with two old
 hats"! And the congregation sang, "I Love Thy Zion, Lord," and it gave
 a century offering. And the money was used toward restoring the roof
 on the Church.

Still the Parson was not satisfied. He wanted to find a
 surviving member of the old congregation. ^{But} ~~he~~ diligent inquiry in the
 neighborhood and advertising in The Kentucky Standard of Bardstown
^{only disappointment} brought no results. One day a neighbor ^{to} ~~near~~ the Church said, "Go to
 Aunt Josie's on Short Eighth Street in Louisville. Grandma Elizabeth
 Wimsatt is with her now. Maybe she is still a member." And with stark
 simplicity she added, "In September when her husband was buried, she
 cried, and asked them to lead her to the Church so that she could ~~put~~ ^{put}
~~lay~~ her hand on it once more before she died."

The Parson found Grandma, lovely in her gray hair and with
 the serenity that the blindness of old age brings. Grandma was "proud "
 to see the preacher. Emphatically she affirmed that she never had been
 and never could ~~be~~ a member of any other Church. She joined the Church
 when she was nineteen or twenty, and she was born in '47. Her maiden

name was Shehon. The Parson went home and looked at the old records. And once more his heart sank. For no Elizabeth Shehon was recorded as joining in the 'sixties. The only Shehon of this period was a Rebecca, confirmed on November 18, 1866. Of all disappointments this ^{climax} was the bitterest. But suddenly the Parson sprang up from his desk. He cranked his Model T and hurried back to Short Eighth Street. "Grandma," he asked, "what is your full maiden name?" And Grandma said, "Rebecca Elizabeth Shehon!"

~~And~~ so it came to pass that on December 23rd, 1933, there sat with Grandma her daughter and granddaughter and great-grandson, and also the Parson with a lawyer friend. The Parson had explained his idea to Grandma, and ^{her} answer was ^{that} she shed tears of joy. And now the lawyer was reading his document whereby the old Nelson County congregation and the younger Louisville congregation would be legally merged, and the property of both become the property of the merged congregation. ~~And~~ ^{and} thus ^{also} would the life of both live on in the merged congregation. Carefully the lawyer read, and carefully Grandma listened. When he finished, the lawyer said, "Grandma, by law I must ask you if you understand what it is that you are about to sign." Grandma cleared her throat. "Yes, I know what it means. It means that my husband's ~~grave~~ will be taken care of and so will mine when I die. And my Church will be restored and kept, and there will again be preaching in it." With choking voice the Parson read the eighty-fourth Psalm. The lawyer offered a prayer wrought with emotion. And then the daughter and granddaughter witnessed Grandma's signature, the former writing the name and the latter guiding the aged hand in making its cross. And the tiny great-grandson looked on in earnest wonder.

The next night the Bethany ^{Christmas} carolers sang to Grandma, and ~~and~~ Proudly she explained to the neighbors, "They're singers from my Church." And at the Midnight Service that followed the caroling, ~~the~~

Bethany congregation was told that the merger that it had voted was now consummated, and the congregation at once took action setting aside for future time the Sunday nearest November 18th as a day of special thanksgiving for the Providence that, through Grandma Wimsatt, had preserved for posterity the life of Kentucky's historic Lutheran Church.

No, the old Church is not yet completely restored. But some-
~~day~~ ^{its} walls stand straight and true, and some day they will again
 resound with the ~~Gospel~~ ^{proclamation} of the faith of the fathers who reared their ~~their~~ ^{these}
 walls in faith. Some day the altar, beneath which a former Pastor
 lies buried, will be restored. Some day a monument in the corner of
 the churchyard where the old slaves lie buried will commemorate those
 who loved their earthly masters dearly and their heavenly Master ~~even~~ ^{yet}
 more. Some day the window over the altar will portray a darkey slave
 kneeling for his baptism, ~~with~~ the master who stands his sponsor and
 the Pastor who administers the sacrament, and supremely ~~was~~ the
 Saviour Who redeemed him.

In the meanwhile the old walls stand straight and true as in
 the days when they were built. The old records supplement the tales
 that the old tombstones tell. And Grandma Wimsatt knows that as long
 as she lives, the Bethany carolers will come to her before the Midnight
 Service of Christmas Eve, through storm and blizzard if need be, and that
 the Parson will unfailingly bring her ~~to her~~ ^{to her} Christmas communion the following
 morning.

107
 472 +184 sheet
 73500

NOTE: All quotations from the original records are carefully proof-read for spelling and punctuation. In reported conversations the actual words of the speakers are used, though at times condensed. And the various happenings, and the emotions consequent thereto, are truly and faithfully recorded.

Amazingly coincidental as these happenings are, the Parson has long since learned rather to call such things Providential.

The Parson, alias

The Rev. Ivan Neft, Pastor,
Bethany Lutheran Church,
407 Evelyn Avenue,
Louisville, Kentucky.

In early 1929 a new Parson was rummaging through an old cupboard of
a little Church in Louisville, Kentucky. One usually finds ^{such} interesting
things in old Church cupboards. ^{what would Bethany Church in Louisville field?} But the search went on, and nothing
more exciting than yellowed Sunday School records ^{was being} had been unearthed, ^{and}
~~at length~~ ^{the} Parson was disappointed. There now remained only
until the Parson lifted a final miscellany of papers, and there lay
^{And when the Parson lifted them, there lay 2 books!}
two books.

It was evident from the style of binding that the books were record
books, and the condition of the leather indicated that they were very
old. Could they be a hundred years old? the Parson excitedly wondered.
^{And} hurriedly dropping to one knee and supporting the books on the
other, he opened the topmost book.

"Baptisms" was inscribed at the top of the page. ^{that lay open.} ~~and it was recorded~~
that ^{One} "Napolion, child of Alfred & wife Phebe, "borne" May 30th, 1835"
was baptized June 21st, 1835. For a moment the Parson wondered at the
omission of the surname, but in the same moment, being Kentucky-born,
he wondered whether this could be the record of a darkey slave baptism.
Yes! For there, after recording the further baptism of the same date
of little "Synthia, child of Syrus & wife Mariah," was the notation:
"These are ³⁰⁰ slaves, belonging to the estate of Amos Smith, Dec."

For more than two hours the Parson remained in his strained position,
poring over the newly found treasure. The books were the records of
an old Church in Nelson County, Kentucky. Evidently it had not been
far from the county seat of Bardstown, and that meant that it was
not far from the old Rowan Home where Stephen Collins Foster was a
guest when he was inspired to write "My Old Kentucky Home". Here
then was a Church, long antedating the writing of the immortal
composer's masterpiece, whose folk lived the ³⁰⁰ life that the deathless
song portrayed.

In ~~1929~~^{late} 1929 a new Parson was rummaging through an old cupboard of a little Church in Louisville, Kentucky. One usually finds interesting things in old Church cupboards. But the search went on, and nothing more exciting than yellowed Sunday School attendance records had been unearthed. Somewhat disappointed, the Parson lifted a final miscellany of papers, -- and there lay two books!#

It was evident# from the style of the binding that the books were record books, and the condition# of the leather indicated that they were very old. Could they be a century# old, the Parson wondered in the moment before he excitedly opened the topmost one.

#It was evident from the style of binding that the books were record books, and the condition of the leather indicated that they were very old. Could they be a century old? the Parson excitedly wondered.

Hurriedly dropping to one knee and supporting his newly found treasure on the other, the Parson opened the topmost book. "Baptismal Record" was inscribed across the top of the page. And the first recording on the page concerned one "Napoleon, child of Silas and Phoebe." For a moment the Parson wondered at the omission of the surname, but in the same moment he wondered whether -- for the Parson was Kentucky-born -- whether this could be the record of a slave darkey slave baptism. Yes! there was the explanatory note: "These are servants belongong to the estate of Amos Smith." ¹⁰⁰ Quickly the Parson turned to the front of the book. -A title-page set forth that this was the record of the St. Paul's Church in Nelson County, Kentucky. Evidently it was not far from the county seat of Bardstown, and that meant that it was not far from the old Rowan Home, where Stephen Collins Foster was a guest when he was inspired to write "My Old Kentucky Home". Here then was a Church, long antedating the writing of immortal composer's masterpiece, and here was a Church that whose people lived the life that the deathless song portrayed.

The first record in the book was dated 1817. It told of the baptism of

In early 1929 the new Parson of a little church in Louisville, Kentucky, was rummaging through an old cup

In early 1929 a new Parson was rummaging through an old cupboard of a little Church in Louisville, Kentucky. One usually finds interesting things in old church cupboards. But the search went on, and nothing more exciting than yellowed Sunday School attendance records had been unearthed. Somewhat disappointed that his search had yielded nothing further, the Parson lifted a final miscellany of papers. -- And there lay two books!

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It was evident from the style of the binding that the books were record books, and from the condition of the leather ~~use~~ that the books were very old. Could they be a century old, the Parson wondered in the moment before excitedly he opened the topmost one.

In early 1929 the new Parson of a little Church in Louisville, Kentucky, was rummaging through

In early 1929 the New Parson

a slave newly purchased by one Amos Smith, named Phoebe. She became the mother, seventeen years later, of little "Napolion", who was baptised at the age of three weeks.

Bishop
buried under
altar. —

whose people lived the life that the deathless song portrayed.

Sadness &
Tragedy
Whisper
Lies. A
former pastor
gave up
ministry
continue to
come to
preaching
not receive
communion
again. When
dying request
that "no
funeral be
preached" for
him. And so
laid away in
old churchyard
in silence,
broken,
doubtless,
only by the
weeping of
those who
knew the
light that
had been laid
on the life
of this servant
of God.

In those early hours with the records more than worth their weight in gold the Parson got a vivid mental picture of the life of the old Church, and that picture was intensified with passing weeks and months. What impressed him at the outset was the relationship of the darkey slaves to their masters in this congregation. ~~Adult-slaves-were-brought-to-their~~ baptism. Not only were the tiny slave babies brought to their baptism, but so also were adult slaves. In fact, the earliest recorded ministerial act in the old books was the baptism, at Christiastide of 1817, of the Phoebe who, ~~bees~~ 17 years later became the mother of little "Napolion". And the darkeys came to Church with their masters, having their appointed places in the old wagons that brought the entire household, and doubtless having their appointed place in the Church itself. Surely, the Parson concluded, there was a "slave Gallery" for these dusky members of the congregation. And these darkeys communed with their masters, coming forward with them to the same Table of the Lord. And when they fell into their eternal sleep, solaced by the comfort of their religion, they were brought to the Church as were their masters. And there their funerals were "preached", and their mortal remains laid gently to rest in the old churchyard, there to lie with their beloved masters until both be called to the resurrection of the just.

Especially significant ^{were} was the old communion records of the darkies in those critical years when the War between the States was being fought. For during the War that finally brought them freedom from bondage, these indissoluble darkeys showed that they were bound to their masters by a bond of love, and as had been their wont in years past, they still came to the same Lord's Supper with their masters. And so also did they continue for decades after ~~that~~ the War, but with a difference! Before and during

With stark simplicity, go to Aunt Josie hedges on short eighth street in Louisville grandpa elizabeth wimsatt is with her. when her husband was buried in september grandpa cried and asked them to lead her to the church so that she could touch it once more before she died. ~~may~~ maybe she is still a member.

Quite largely stalked in the records too. After the war and some of the pastors in the church will be mentioned.

the War these daekirs were listed as possessions: ~~Harvey's~~-Allen Bard's Mary, Smith's Phoebe, and Harvey's Allen. But after the War they are listed in their own surnames, and ~~these~~ surnames are those of their former owners! Bard's Mary becomes Mary Bard. Smith's Phoebe is now Phoebe Smith. And of all the darkies in the old Church, only one did not take the surname under which he was listed as a possession. Harvey's Allen became Allen Bard. Could it be, the Parson wondered, that Allen had formerly belonged to the Bards and out of an old affection had taken their name in preference to his present owner?

And out of the old records one pieced the story of the buidligh of an old brick Church. For these faithful ones built the walls of their Jerusalem. The ~~That~~ Pastor of the building, one George Yeager, must have been a go-getter! Less than one month after he came, ~~to the old one~~ the congregation, in stated meeting, solemnly pronounced its present log building "uncomfortable". In another month a building fund was voted. In another month pledges totaled \$259.82^{87 1/2}, almost 90% of the actual cost of the proposed building. On the last Sunday of July, 1833, a congregational meeting decided to hold another congregational meeting at 7:00 the next morning to tear down the old Church! And the record duly states that said congregational meeting was held, the old log Church torn down, the timbers needed for the new Church set aside, and the rest of the material "was exposed to public vendue but none was sold"! On October 23 the cornerstone was laid, and on the following May 4th the new Church was solemnly dedicated to God, the 2 "building superintendents" reporting that not one cent was owing to any contractor or laborer.

Other interesting treasures the old ~~records~~ ^{books} contained. There were giants in those days, and they strode through the ancient ~~books~~ ^{records}. There were the circuit-riding Henkels of New Market, Virginia, who each year rode ~~through~~ into Ohio, and then down into Kentucky and Tennessee, and back home through the Carolinas, preaching, baptizing, catechizing, confirming, and holding funeral services ~~tha~~ for those deceased since their last coming. There was John Jacob

Lehmanowsky, Polish Jew and converted Christian, one of Napoleon's most trusted colonels, who after his emperor's defeat transferred his allegiance to a mightier Captain and spent his ~~obscure~~ the last of his four score years as a missionary of the cross in the "West". These fascinated the Parson, but the life of the old congregation gripped him, and the old brick Church obsessed him. Was it still standing? He wrote to a friend, who wrote back, "There is nothing there now." And the Parson was crushed. ~~But he loved the old Church~~ *What were the records done in Bethany ch of Jonesville,* Since there was no longer anything there in Nelson County, and since the depression was on and a ninety mile round trip cost money, the Parson did not go to Nelson County to investigate. But he still loved the old Church, and he vowed that some day he would find enough money to buy a wee parcel of ground near the old site of the old Church - that site of course to be determined - and erect a commemorative tablet. *Entrusted by Synod*

Almost four years later an intimate friend asked, "Have you ever heard of St. Paul's Lutheran Church of Nelson County?" And ~~before~~ while the Parson was itching to tell what he knew, the friend rambled on and on. Six days ago a young lady who was in his office ~~in-pa~~ heard him speak the word "Lutheran" and passed to tell him that she had been baptized in a Lutheran Church. No, not in Louisville; in Nelson County. Yes, there's a Church there, a very old ^{for} one. And the friend told the Parson that the young lady and he went on Sunday dinner to the young lady's sister who lives near the Church, and thence to the Church itself. And neighborhood folk say that it is a hundred years old! "Please tell Miss Katie," said the Parson, "to write her sister that she will have two guests for dinner this coming Sunday also."

The dinner was all that Kentucky hospitality could provide. But the Parson's thoughts were on a building a half mile away. What would it look like? ³⁴ The friend ^{had} said that it was falling into decay. At long last the Parson walked the road that for ¹⁴ eleven decades had been called Lutheran Lane. And soon he saw a roof ~~g~~gazing through the trees, and never was pilgrim of old in his first enraptured gaze upon the Eternal City more stirred than the Parson.

When he entered the ancient gate a Voice within him said, "The place whereon thou standest is holy ground." And when he stood within the ruined Church his own heart sang, "How lovely are Thy dwellings, O Lord of hosts." And he saw not the gaping holes in the roof, nor the sunken floor, nor the fallen altar, nor the nests that the birds had built in fulfilment of Scripture. There was where those darkies had knelt for their baptisms. There ^{was} where the Pastor-Colonel Lehmanowsky had stood. ^{Conceded to the State} Hurriedly the Parson noted that there was no slave gallery. So the darkies had sat on the same floor with their masters. Othere were with the Parson, but he bowed his head and gave thanks for the old Church. "Remove not the ancient landmark," sounded within him, and he vowed that now, instead of buying a parcel of ground to erect a monument, he would bend every enegy to restoring this most glorious monument. Meanwhile, rumor had spread through the neighborhood and a crowd was gathering. Without the Parson's prompting it, someone asked whether there couldn't be preachin'. And while the congregation sat on rich grass, in cool shade and beside century old tombstones, the eternal Gospel was once more proclaimed on the sacred ground.

What were the records doing in Bethany Church of Louisville, the Parson wondered. A search of ~~twenty-five~~ ^{years} old minutes revealed that Synod had, a quarter of a century ago, entrusted the care of the old Church to the Louisville congregation. But now there was no longer anything there. And since the depression was on^x and a ninety mile round trip cost money, the Parson did not go to Nelson County to investigate. But he still loved the old Church, and he vowed that some day he would find out where it had stood, and would purchase near by a wee parcel of ground and erect a commemorative tablet to the old congregation and its old brick Church.

On the way back to Louisville the friend, Mr. David Etheridge, ~~said~~ reached in his pocket and said, "I am selfish enough to want to be the first to give toward the first dollar toward the restoration of the Church!" ^{And he furnished a dollar} And on the following Sunday the Parson told his Bethany ~~people~~ ^{into the Parson's Hall} folk of the finding of the old Church, of their twenty-five year old obligation thereto, and requested

Sept 1933 when her husband was buried she visited & asked them to lead her to the church so that she could lay her hand on it once more when she died.

of the dollar already given. What Bethany congregation gave was mostly in pennies and nickels, for those depression days were bitter. But when it was over, and a few additional pennies added, the Parson could announce, "we have \$5.00 toward restoring the old Church." And then he added, "One hundred years ago today the old congregation decided to tear down its old log building. One hundred years later we take up the first general offering to restore it."

three months later

Then came the Centennial of the Laying of the Cornerstonw. On an Indian summer day in late October, such as Kentucky alone can give, a long caravan of automobiles set out from Louisville on the First Annual Pilgrimage to the old shrine. Some 600 folk from Louisville made the journey, and Nelson and adjoining counties swelled the throng. The Parson showed them the old record books. He showed the receipt for the dressed lumber that went into the Church a hundred years ago, itemized in shillings per hundred feet and totaling "\$24.98^{5/8}". There was the receipt of one Peter Bugher "for bildin th luteran meetin Hous in full"! There was the report of the building superintendents that the building *which cost would have run them \$3,000.00 in 1933.* cost \$265.05^{1/2}. There were the pledges toward the "shake rail fence, properly staked and ridered", mostly in terms of 100 rails and 22 stakes. There was the old building fund pledge list, ~~a majority of pledges being in terms of~~ one pledge for \$2 being marked "paid with two old hats"! And the congregation sang "I love Thy Zion, Lord," and it gave a century offering, and the money was used toward restoring the roof on the Church.

~~But~~ still the Parson was not satisfied. He wanted to find a surviving member of the old congregation. But diligent inquiry in the neighborhood and advertising in the Kentucky Standard of Bardstown brought no results. One day a ^{Mrs. Maude King} neighbor to the Church said, "Go to Aunt Josie Hedge's on Short Eighth Street in Louisville. ^{Elizabeth} Grandma Wimsatt is with her now. Maybe she is still a member." *and with stark simplicity she added,*

The Parson found Grandma, lovely in her gray hair and with the serenity that the blindness of old age brings. Grandma was "proud" to see the preacher.

Emphatiffally she affirmed that she never had been and never could be a member of any other Church. She joined the Church when she was nineteen or twenty, and she was born in '47. Her maiden name was Shehon. The Parson went home and looked at the old records. ^{and} ~~But~~ Once more his heart sank. ~~Here his heart's desire was in his hand, and then lost.~~ For no Elizabeth Shehon was recorded as joining in the '60's. The one in the '30's would not do. The only Shehon in the '60's was a Rebecca, confirmed on November 18, 1866. ~~Would~~ Of all disappointments, this was the bitterest. But suddenly the Parson sprang up from his desk. He cranked his Model T and hurried back to Short Eighth Street. "Grandma," he asked, "what is your FULL maiden name?" "Rebecca Elizabeth Shehon," ^{and said} said Grandma!

And so it came to pass that on December 23rd, 1933, there sat with Grandma her daughter and granddaughter ^{+ great-grandson} ~~(herself a mother!)~~ and the Parson with a lawyer friend. The Parson had explained his idea to Grandma, and her answer was to shed tears of joy. And now the lawyer was there with his document whereby the old Nelson County congregation and the younger Louisville congregation would be legally merged, and the property of both become the property of the merged congregation. (Thus would the life of the older live ^{forward} on in the merged.) Carefully the lawyer read the document to Grandma and carefully she listened. Then the lawyer said, Grandma, by law I must ask you if you understand what it is that you are about to sign." Grandma cleared her throat. "Yes, I know what it means. It means that my husband's grave will be taken care of and so will mine when I die. And my Church will be restored and kept, and there will again be preaching in it." With choking voice the Parson read the eighty-fourth Psalm. The lawyer offered a prayer wrought with emotion. And then the daughter and granddaughtger witnessed Grandma's signature, the former writing the name and the latter guiding the aged hand in making its ^{own} mark. And the tiny great-grandson looked on in earnest wonder. ~~The next night~~ ~~--The-next-night~~ the Bathery Christmas carolers sang to Grandma. And at the Midnight Service that followed the congregation was told that the merger

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No! the old Church is not yet completely restored. But some day its walls ~~will again resound~~ whose foundations were laid in faith will again resound to the proclaiming of the faith of the fathers. Some day there will be a monument in the corner of the churchyard where the old slaves lie buried, stained glass window over the altar will commemorating those who loved their earthly masters dearly, and their heavenly Master even more. Some day ~~there will be a~~ window over the altar will portray a darkey slave kneeling for his baptism. ~~There will also be~~ ^{with} the master who stands his sponsor, and the Pastor who administers the sacrament, And supremely ~~will there be~~ the Saviour Who redeemed him.

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The Parson, alias

Ivan Heft

The Rev. Ivan Heft, Pastor,
Bethany Lutheran Church,
407 Evelyn Avenue,
Louisville, Kentucky.

P.S. - This manuscript contains less than
3360 words. *I.H.*

REMOVE NOT THIS ANCIENT LANDMARK

By Ivan Heft

In early 1929 a new Parson was rummaging through an old cupboard of a little Church in Louisville, Kentucky. One usually finds such interesting things in old Church cupboards. What would this cupboard yield? But the search went on, and nothing more exciting than yellowed Sunday School records was being unearthed, and the Parson was growing disappointed. There remained only a final miscellany of papers. And when the Parson lifted them there lay two books.

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"Baptisms" was inscribed at the top of the page that lay open. One "Napoleon, child of Alfred & wife Phoebe, borne May 30th, 1835" was baptized June 21st, 1835. For a moment the Parson wondered at the omission of the surname, but in the same moment, being Kentucky-born, he wondered whether this could be the record of a darkey slave baptism. Yes! For there, after recording the further baptism on the same date of little "Synthia, child of Syrus & wife Mariah," was the notation: "These are slaves, belonging to the estate of Amos Smith, dec."

For more than two hours the Parson remained in his strained position, poring over the newly found treasure. The books were the records of an old Church in Nelson County, Kentucky. Evidently the

Church had been near Bardstown, and that meant that it was not far from the old Rowan Home where Stephen Collins Foster was a guest when he was inspired to write "My Old Kentucky Home". Here then was a Church, long antedating the writing of the immortal composer's masterpiece, whose folk lived the life that the deathless song portrayed.

In those early hours with the priceless books the Parson got a vivid mental picture of the life of the old Church, and that picture was intensified with his living in those books for coming weeks and months. There was the relationship of the darkey slaves to their masters. Not only were tiny slave babies brought to their baptisms, but so also were adult slaves. Indeed, in the earliest baptismal record, of the year 1818, Silas and Phoebe, "servants of Amos Smith," were listed. Doubtless this was the "Phebe" who became the mother of little "Napolion". And these darkeys came to Church with their masters, and apparently trod with them the same way of salvation. For at "a protracted meeting commenced on the 20th of May 1843" there was "received in full connection of the Church.....also a colored man belonging to the estate of George Kurtz sr: Decd Named Daniel." Nor were these dusky members immune from congregational discipline. For after the name of Lewis Christopher's Jane is noted "Dismissed", and then "receivd again". These darkeys communed with their masters at the same Table of the Lord. And when they fell into their last sleep they were brought to the Church as were their masters, there their funerals were "preached", and their mortal remains were laid gently to rest in the old churchyard, to lie with their loved white folks until all be called to the resurrection of the just.

Of especial import were the communion records of the critical

years when the War between the States was being fought. Nelson County had its representation in the Congress of the Confederate States of America. Yet during that War that was to bring them freedom from bondage, these darkeys showed that they were bound to their masters by a stronger and holier bond, and as had been their wont in years past they still came to the same Lord's Supper with their owners. So also did they continue in years after the War, but now with a difference. Before and during the War they were listed as possessions. It was Hays' David, and Bard's Mary, and Harvey's Allen. But after the War they are listed in their own surnames, and the surnames are those of their former masters! Hays' David becomes David Hays. Bard's Mary becomes Mary Bard. And of all the darkies in the old Church there was only one who did not take the surname under which he was listed as a possession. Harvey's Allen became Allen Bard. Could it be, the Parson wondered, that Allen had formerly belonged to the Bards and out of an old affection had taken their name in preference to that of his present owner? Later, prompted by the observation that the names of Harvey's Allen and Bard's Mary always appeared together in the communion lists and that both were always present or absent together, the Parson surmised that they were man and wife. And this was eventually verified. The Harveys had sold their Allen to the Bards, and he should have become Bard's Allen. But everybody still called him Harvey's Allen, and thus his name was carried in the Church records until emancipation brought surnames to himself and wife.

Out of the records one pieced the story of the building of an old brick Church. The Pastor of that building must have been a go-getter! Three weeks after his coming, the congregation solemnly pronounced its

former log building "uncomfortable". In four more weeks a building fund of \$261.12 $\frac{1}{2}$ was pledged, not quite 99% of the actual cost of the prospective building. The next five months were evidently given to the gathering of materials, for darkey slaves must carry clay for the bricks, and then mould and burn them. But at last, on Sunday, August 11th, 1833, a congregational meeting decided to hold another congregational meeting at 8 o'clock the next morning, to tear down the old Church and "make sale of such materials as would not be wanted toward erecting the new church." And the record of August 12th duly states that "the congregation met according to appointment. The old house was first taken down, and then, those materials above specified, were exposed to publick vendue, - but, did not sell"! On October 23rd the cornerstone was laid. And on the following May 4th the new Church was "Dedicated to the triune God," its two "building superintendents" reporting that not a quarter cent was owing to any contractor or laborer.

The congregation now turned its attention toward a "snake rail fence, properly staked and ridged," and many pledges of "100 rails and 22 stakes" were made, while others gave money toward the ironware for the gates. And a cast-iron wood-burning stove was purchased. There being a "ballance" of \$16.31 $\frac{1}{2}$ in the treasury, and a special collection having brought in \$6.69 $\frac{3}{4}$, the congregation was able to expend the necessary \$19.64 for the stove.

Munificent were the salaries of those days! In 1844 the sexton received \$3.75 for his year's labors. The Mexican War must have brought prosperity, for in 1849 the wage was \$8. Post-war depression then evidently set in, those days when

"hard times come a-knockin' at the door,

Then my old Kentucky home, good-night!"

for in 1852 the sum had dropped to \$7. But 1854 and 1855 brought rising tide, and respectively paid the faithful sexton \$9 and \$9.08.

Strange at first sight was the numbering in the communion records.

Of the forty-eight communicants of September 26th, 1835, the list begins:

1. Jemima Lutz.
3. Jn. Weller et uxor.
5. H. Streit et uxor.
7. D. Matheis et uxor.
8. John Kurtz.
10. Jas. Combs et uxor.

In later years the same Pastor simplifies his records by substituting "a Wife" for "et uxor". Did someone protest his Latinity?

Many are the contributions to orthography by the old recorders! Priscilla, Lidia, Jamimah, Siras, Cate - and Catie, Pachel, and the above-mentioned Phebe, Syrus and Synthia are chief among many. Casander - alias Cassandra, Lavenia and Hector show a smattering of classical background. While one George Hays, his slave Captain, and a submerged apostrophe all suffer in a statement concerning "one coulererd man of George Hase, s Named Capton."

Mute tragedy stalks between the lines of the records. A Pastor is deposed from his ministry. And although he lives for forty years thereafter and continues to attend preaching, he does not commune. When he dies he is "buried in St. Paul's graveyard by his request."

But he also "refused to have a funeral preached." And so he was laid away in the old churchyard, in a silence broken only by the weeping of

those who knew the blight that early had been laid on the life of this servant of God.

For the historically minded there were choice morsels in the old books. There were giants in those days, and they strode through the ancient records. There were the circuit-riding Henkels of New Market, Virginia, who rode each year into Ohio, then down into Kentucky and Tennessee, and finally back home through the Carolinas; preaching, catechizing, confirming, administering the sacraments, and holding funeral services for those deceased since their last coming. There was John Jacob Lehmanowsky, Polish Jew and converted Christian, one of Napoleon's most trusted colonels, who after his emperor's defeat came to America and there transferred his allegiance to a mightier Captain, to spend the last of his four-score and six years as an ordained missionary of the cross in the "West". These fascinated the Parson. And the life of the old congregation gripped him. But the old Church obsessed him. He wrote to a friend, and the friend wrote back, "There is nothing there now." And the Parson was crushed.

But what were the records doing in Bethany Church of Louisville? How came they there instead of in the archives of Synod? A search of old minutes revealed that Synod had, a quarter of a century ago, entrusted the care of the old Church to the Louisville congregation. There was a Church in Nelson County then. But now it was no more. And since the depression was on, and a ninety mile round trip cost money, the Parson did not go to Nelson County to investigate. But he loved the old Church, and he vowed that some day he would find out where it had stood. And he would purchase a wee parcel of ground near by and erect a tablet commemorating the old congregation and its old brick Church.

The Parson soon traced the life of the congregation back to 1795, three years from the birth of Kentucky as a State. Doubtless it was even older. What a pity that it must die!

Slightly more than four years after the finding of the records an intimate friend asked the parson, "Have you ever heard of St. Paul's Lutheran Church of Nelson County?" And without giving opportunity for reply he went on with his story. Six days ago a young lady in his office overheard him speak the word "Lutheran", and paused to tell him that she had been baptized in a Lutheran Church. - No, not in Louisville; in Nelson County. - Yes, there is a Church there, a very old one. And the friend told the parson how on the Sunday immediately following, the young lady and he went for dinner to the young lady's sister who lived near the Church, and thence to the Church itself. And neighborhood folk said that it was a hundred years old! Then said the Parson, "Please tell Miss Katie to write her sister that she will have two guests for dinner this coming Sunday also." And into the small hours he told his friend what he knew of St. Paul's Lutheran Church of Nelson County.

The dinner that was set before the friend and the parson was all that Kentucky hospitality could provide. But the parson's thoughts were on a building a half mile away. The friend had said that it was falling into decay. What would it look like? At long last the dinner was over, and the parson walked the road that for twelve decades had been called Lutheran Lane. Soon he saw a roof gleaming through the trees, and never was pilgrim of old in his first enraptured gaze upon the Eternal City more stirred than the parson. When he entered the ancient gate a voice within him said, "The place whereon thou standest

**PAGE(S)
MISSING**

put her hand on it once more before she died."

The Parson found Grandma, lovely in her gray hair and with the serenity that the blindness of old age brings. Grandma was "proud" to see the preacher. Emphatically she affirmed that she never had been and never could be a member of any other Church. She joined the Church when she was nineteen or twenty, and she was born in '47. Her maiden name was Shehon. The Parson went home and looked at the old records. And once more his heart sank. For no Elizabeth Shehon was recorded as joining in the 'sixties. The only Shehon of that period was a Rebecca, confirmed on November 18, 1866. Of all disappointments this climax was the bitterest. But suddenly the Parson sprang up from his desk. He hurried back to Short Eighth Street. "Grandma," he asked, "what was your full maiden name?" And Grandma replied, "Rebecca Elizabeth ~~Shehon~~ Sb

With choking voice the Parson read the eighty-fourth Psalm. The lawyer offered a prayer wrought with emotion. And then the daughter and granddaughter witnessed Grandma's signature, the former writing the name and the latter guiding the aged hand in making its cross. And the tiny great-grandson looked on in earnest wonder.

The next night the Bethany Christmas carolers sang to Grandma. Proudly she explained to her neighbors, "They're from my Church." And at the Midnight Service that followed the caroling, Bethany congregation was told that the merger that it had voted was now consummated, and the congregation at once took action setting aside for future time the Sunday nearest November 18th as a day of special thanksgiving for the Providence that, through Grandma Wimsatt, had preserved unbroken the life of Kentucky's historic Lutheran Church.

No, the old Church is not yet completely restored. But some day its walls will again resound with the proclamation of the faith of the fathers who reared their walls in faith. Some day the altar, beneath which a former Pastor lies buried, will be restored. Some day a monument in the corner of the churchyard where the old slaves lie buried will commemorate those who loved their earthly masters dearly and their heavenly Master yet more. Some day the window over the altar will portray a darkey slave kneeling for his baptism, the master who stands his sponsor and the Pastor who administers the sacrament, and supremely the Saviour who redeemed him.

Meanwhile the hallowed walls stand straight and true as in the days when they were built. The venerable records supplement the tales that the tombstones tell. And Grandma Wimsatt knows that as long as she lives, the Bethany carolers will come to her before Midnight Service of Christmas Eve, through storm and blizzard if need be, and that the Parson will unfailingly bring her Christmas communion the following morning.

Siras, Harriot, Adalade, Marthy, Juliann, Louiza, Phebe, Synthia, Lidia, Sebastian, Pricilla, Salie, Cate - or Catie, Focie, Ester, Jamimah, Gemima, Ratchel, Allon, Emley, Adaline

One wonders what geographical feats had been achieved to cause the infant daughter of John Lutz & Wife to be christend Panama Catherine.

Simmons' Ann; Ann Simmons; Hays' David; David Hays.

Belinda, Mahala
(Alias Casander, Cassandra, Lucinda, Artemis~~ia~~, Lavenia, Hector, Fidelia,

Hays-Hase the

Also one coulererd
man of George Hase, s
Named Captain. CAPTON.

One Sister Susan who departed this life at the age of 72 was described as a cincer christian.

Deposed. Died May 8th 1867 and buried in St. Pauls graveyard by his request. No funeral. Refused to have a funeral preached.

Killed by Morgans men.

And the Parson would like to bet that the Revd Borns of 1855 was really the Rev. Barnes.

Communicant record:

2. Henry Streit et uxor -
4. Samuel Wisehart et uxor -
- 6, Jonathan Weller et uxor -

The following numbering is self-explanatory: in a communion record

The following numbering in a communion record, of '35#3 while unusual, need not be puzzling:

1. Jemima Lutz -
3. Jn. Weller et uxor -
5. H. Streit et uxor -
7. D. Matheis et uxor -
8. ~~Jas. Combs~~ John Kuttz
10. Jas. Combs et uxor

Pre- and post-war periods of normalcy, prosperity and depression may be charted from the annual salaries of the sextons. In 1844 M. Heffley received \$3.75. For 1845 Samuel Wiseheart received \$7. The following year brought \$6, 1849:\$8 Post-war depression may have set in, for 1852 brought but \$7. But 1854 and 1855 respecbrought rising tide, for respectively they paid the faithful sexton \$9 and \$9.08.