

A Sketch of the
Life and Labors
OF

Richard McNemar

By
J.P. MacLean

Edited, Expanded, and Annotated by
Bradley S. Cobb

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With Additional Notes, Corrections, and an Appendix
by Bradley S. Cobb

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This work is dedicated to Jesse Cobb, the lovely woman who was willing to give up the computer so I could finish this thing.

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Preface

Richard McNemar is an enigma to many students of the Restoration Movement. He shows up as a co-worker with Barton W. Stone, and his name is on one of the most historically significant documents of the Restoration. Yet he is not much more than a footnote in the history books. This primarily stems from his conversion to Shakerism in 1805. However, for those students who want to know more about him, and want to know what happened to him after the *Last Will and Testament of the Springfield Presbytery*, this book is for you.

The author of the book (John Patterson MacLean) was a historian of the Shakers (publishing several Shaker-related books), and a Universalist minister from Ohio. Since much of McNemar's work as a Shaker was in Ohio, it caught MacLean's attention and influenced him to put together this work, originally published in 1905. Based on his writings, it appears that he was very much in sympathy with the Shaker beliefs and message, as well as also buying in to many of their claims.

One thing that isn't dealt with in this book (because of its Shaker-centric focus) is the McNemar's role in the *Last Will and Testament*. According to John Marshall, one of the signers, it was McNemar who wrote this famous document.

When we first existed as a church, we had the Presbyterian form of government. But Richard McNemar, that eccentric genius, who was then believed by most of us to possess a high degree of piety, power, and great light in religion, took it into his head that our existence in a

formal body, as a Presbytery, was contrary to scripture—that our bond of union was a carnal bond—that we ought to be united by no bond but Christian love—and that this delegated body stood full in the way of Christ and the progress of the revival; which revival would run like fire in dry stubble, if our Presbytery was out of the way. With these enchanting views, and others as visionary and vain, he prepared a piece at home, and brought it to the last meeting of our Presbytery held at Cane Ridge, Bourbon County, Kentucky, June, 1804, entitled, "*The Last Will and Testament of Springfield Presbytery.*" None of us had the least thought of such a thing when we came to that meeting; and when it was proposed, we had many objections against dissolving our Presbytery. But, after being together several days, those enthusiastic fancies so far gained the ascendancy over our judgment, that we consented to subscribe the obnoxious instrument.

As you can see from that statement alone, McNemar's influence lives on in the church, even though he himself left the faith.

This work on the life of Richard McNemar has undergone several editorial changes. Extremely long sentences have been (when possible) divided into smaller ones. Punctuation has been corrected and updated when needed. Spelling has been updated to modern usage. Words which the editor believed to need clarification have been explained in footnotes. Pronouns (such as "he") have been added in many places throughout the work so that the sentences make sense. Any sizable quotations have been set apart as such, conforming more to modern usage.

The original author gives several quotations from various sources, but unfortunately for us, he does not inform us of what those sources are.

We do trust, however, that you will find this work, *A Sketch of the Life and Labors of Richard McNemar* to be interesting, and that it will help you know "the rest of the story."

Bradley S. Cobb
Editor.

Table of Contents

Preface	4
Chapter One: Early Life	8
Chapter Two: Charges of Heresy	14
Chapter Three: The Kentucky Revival	26
Chapter Four: Conversion and New Order	34
Chapter Five: An Account of Labors and Suffering	42
Chapter Six: Travels and Special Missions.....	50
Chapter Seven: Literary and Other Industries.....	62
Chapter Eight: Persecution, Expulsion, Triumph, and Death	76
Bibliography.....	90
Appendix: A Brief Overview of the Shakers	94

Chapter One: Early Life

The reputation of a man depends largely on his environment. Some men climb the ladder of fame, not on account of their ability or worth, but owing to their surroundings. There are others of unquestioned mental powers and force, who have toiled with unceasing disinterestedness and achieved a certain degree of success, but finally became unknown because their sphere of action was circumscribed.

When a man of pronounced talents has labored faithfully and perseveringly, with an eye single to what he believed to be the best for the welfare of his fellow-creatures, and on account of his devotedness to principle has been maligned by those differing from his views, and moreover persecuted by those of his household of faith, it not only becomes a problem in sociology, but also a cause for pointing out a lesson in our common humanity.

There once lived in the Miami country a man who had attained to a greater renown in religious circles than any who have succeeded him in the same borders where his toils were displayed. No man has ever lived who had greater powers of swaying a multitude. So great was his eloquence and magnetism that people flocked to hear him, coming on horseback, in wagons, and on foot, many of whom were from long distances. In one instance it is reputed that 30,000 assembled and listened to his wonderful flights of oratory. At one time he became the principle leader in a new religious movement and practically stood at the head of a young and vigorous sect. Had he been a time-server, a lover of the world's approbation, and proved false to his convictions, the name of Richard McNemar would not have been a mere tradition at this late day. Such a commanding figure deserves more than a passing notice.

Two descriptions of this remarkable man have been preserved. One represents him as:

[T]all and gaunt, but commanding in appearance, with piercing, restless eyes, ever in motion, and an expressive countenance. He was a classical scholar, and read Latin, Greek and Hebrew with ease. His manner of preaching inclined to the fervent and exciting, with much animation and vociferation, which gave him great power over the uncultivated audiences he addressed.

An elderly lady, who personally knew McNemar, thus writes to me concerning him:

It would be admitted no doubt that in respect to person, features, manly and winning address, that his equal would not be easily found by the general observer. I cannot expect to describe justly a man who was counted as handsome as was Richard McNemar; embodied in the wealth of his native endowment, toilsome acquirement, and qualities of mind studiously trained in the successful mission conducive to ruling attainment; thus making supremely expressive the features and visage of face derived from the storage recesses of a most receptive and fruitful mind. In the social gathering, especially when surrounded by mutual friends, his visage and manners were charming, attractive and fairly adorable. I have ever heard him spoken of, by those who knew him best, as being very industrious. And whenever at home (returning from his missionary tours, or business trips), he would generally go to the carpenter shop. He was a good chair and cabinet maker, and unexcelled as a bookbinder. He was especially choice of his tools, and for them made a bureau with drawers, which was fastened in a tool cupboard. This cupboard with the little bureau still stands in the brick building opposite the present Centre Family dwelling at Union Village. He worked very fast and with a marvelous slight. Never did he balk with two strokes where one should suffice.

The patronymic¹ McNemar is a corruption of MacNamara, and literally means (according to Long's "Personal and Family Names") "Son of the Sea." There are two of McNemar's poems extant in manuscript form in which he interprets McNemar to mean "Nobody's Son." One of these poems concludes as follows:

I have heard and believed what the gospel declares,
And strictly obeyed it for more than two years,
And yet you may see after all that is done,
My name is McNemar, or *nobody's son*.

The name is not uniformly spelled. In the several editions of his "Kentucky Revival" it is spelled "McNemar," but in his original manuscript, so far as I have examined, it is "McNamer."

The family of McNemar belonged to the great Scotch-Irish migration that swept over and populated the western half of Pennsylvania. This race was characterized by intelligence, resolution, energy, religious zeal and morality. It was a God-fearing, liberty-loving, tyrant-hating, Sabbath-keeping, covenant-adhering people.

The forbears of Richard McNemar belonged to this race. His mother was a Knox. In a manuscript entitled "*Memorable events in the Life of Richard McNemar*," written by himself, we learn that he was born Nov. 20, 1770, in Tuscarora, Pa. In 1775 the family moved further up the Juniata River, to a place called Heart's Log, five miles above the Standing Stone, now called Huntingdon. After residing there four years the family moved eastward about ten miles to a rich settlement on Shaner's Creek where they continued about three years. About the close of the Revolutionary War or in the autumn of 1783, the family moved south into the Kishacoqueller Valley.

Richard, the youngest of the family, lived with his parents after all his brothers and sisters were scattered, or gone into the world. In the summer he worked on the farm with his father and in the winter went to school until the year 1786, when, with the good will and consent of his parents, he left home and took charge of a school in Stone Valley, on April 1st. During the summer of 1787 he worked at odd jobs and in the fall went to the Redstone country. In the fall of 1788 he taught school in the Valley, but in the spring of 1789 he

¹ Name from one's father.—Editor.

returned to Redstone and commenced teaching there. He went to Kentucky, then returned on January 1st, 1790 and began to teach at Ligonía and continued until the last of April 1791.

About the middle of May following Richard began teaching at Salem; six months later he descended the Ohio in company with Findley, Marshall and Allen, and arrived at Maysville (then called Limestone) November 8th. About the following Christmas, in company with Malcolm Worley, he entered school and began the study of Latin. On March 31st, 1792, he embarked for Cincinnati where he arrived early the next morning. Here he remained three months preaching fifteen sermons in Cincinnati, Columbia, Round Bottom and Covalt's Station, in the interests of the Presbyterian Church.

About the last of June he returned to Elkhorn and resumed his studies. The following December he removed to Cane Ridge, Ky.,² and lived with Robert Finley. Thus was his state until May 1793, when he took up his abode with Elder John Luckes, where he remained till the spring of 1795. He then commenced to reside in Madison County and taught school in the autumn of 1796.

He returned to Cane Ridge, and in January 1797 was licensed to preach. In the fall moved to Cabin Creek. In the fall of 1798, he resided on the river hill. McNemar attended the General Assembly in Virginia, May 1799, returning the last part of June, and the following November was present at the Presbytery at Orangedale, a small hamlet south of Middletown, Ohio, now called Le Sourdsville. He attended the Presbytery in company with John Dunlavy, for the purpose of ordaining Archibald Steel as pastor of the congregation.

“On that occasion I found a large and respectable congregation, had an interview with their pastor, James Kemper, at the house of Jonathan Tichnor, one of the elders, where I held an evening meeting, and where we lodged together. Kemper was about to move up his family from the vicinity of Cincinnati and to take charge of the Turtle Creek (now Union Village) congregation.”

It was during this time that Richard preached at Turtle Creek

² The Original document spelled this as “Caneridge.” —Editor.

for the first time.

The mind of Richard McNemar was undergoing an evolution to which he was not awakened until his teachings caused much questioning. Essentially he had a broad mind, and while he believed fervently and was ever faithful to the dictates of his conscience, yet his mind was ever open for more light. In no sense was he a bigot. He accorded to others the same rights he reserved for himself. When conscious of errors in theology he did not hesitate to accept and reject. He was ever conscientious in the pursuit of the things he believed to be true.

Chapter Two: Charges of Heresy

The records of the Presbytery of Washington show that its first session was held at Johnston's Fork Meetinghouse, April 9th and 10th, 1799. This Presbytery was composed of seven ministers and the churches known as Johnston's Fork, Cabin Creek, Washington, Union, Lee's Creek and Red Oak, in Kentucky; and Springfield, (Springdale), Hold's Creek, West Union, Clear Creek, Orangedale, Brush Creek, Denny's Station on Mad River, and Chillicothe, in Ohio. At this session, the Eagle Creek congregation, three miles from West Union, Adams Co., Ohio, petitioned, through McNemar to be taken into the Presbytery. At the session at Orangedale in November, McNemar presided. The ministers were:

Richard McNemar
John Dunlavy
James Kemper
Mathew G. Wallace
John E. Finley
William Speer
John P. Campbell.

At the first session, McNemar was appointed commissioner to the Assembly, and was to supply¹ Union Church, Kentucky, one half the time. At the session of the Presbytery, October 24, 1799, he gave a narrative of the transactions of the Assembly, and the "Presbytery expressed their approbation of his faithfulness as commissioner."

In the Presbytery meeting, held at Red Oak, April 14-15, 1801,

¹ To Preach for them.—Editor.

by request of McNemar, his pastoral relation with the church at Cabin Creek, Lewis County, Kentucky, was dissolved. That church was represented by General Joseph Darlington, an elder in the West Union church, who stated "that on account of the inability to comply with the terms of McNemar's settlement, they agree to a dissolution of their connection with their parson, provided he continue half the time." The Presbytery then directed "that Mr. McNemar employ only half his time in that congregation, and that they pay him proportionately according to the terms of his settlement."

The period of Richard's life now reached was during the rise of the Kentucky Revival which had such a potent influence over the minds of some of the ablest Presbyterians ministers of Ohio and Kentucky. Doubtless these ministers were not cognizant of what influence had been awakening their religious perceptions. The doctrine of free grace was and had been vigorously promulgated with perceptible effect even in the Presbyterian fold. The more liberally disposed Presbyterian clergy engaged in the work of the revival, though frowned upon by the more rigid. The preachers who had been drawn into the movement omitted the doctrines of election and reprobation as taught in the Confession of Faith and vigorously proclaimed a free salvation to all, through the blood of the Lamb. They engaged in no contradictory explanations and double meanings which scholastic divines had made acceptable. This style of preaching was not such as was common among Presbyterians, which caused a murmuring that spread throughout certain sections of the country. The camp-meetings brought different types of the clergy together and from this mutual interest broader views rapidly began to dominate. Amid this gathering of the storm, the ministers treated one another in a tolerant spirit.

Richard McNemar had forged to the front as the leading spirit in the revival that had shaken the population of Ohio and Kentucky. Being of an independent cast of mind, imaginative and fervent he was led to preach more explicitly than the others. It is then of no surprise that he should be singled out as the first victim to rest under the charge of heresy. The opposition originated in the congregation of Cabin Creek, of which Richard McNemar had charge. The complaints and charges dated November 3, 1801, were laid before the Presbytery at Springfield, (Springdale, Hamilton County, Ohio)

on the 11th following, of which a transcript is here given:

The Rev. Presbytery:—As we expect some accounts of the unhappy situation of our congregation have reached you and excited anxiety, and as we consider ourselves under your care, and look to you for counsel, and interference between our pastor, Mr. McNemar, and us, who were members of his session, together with a great part of the people; we take the liberty to give you a brief account of our differences, from their first commencement to the present time.

Sometime last winter he began, as we believe, in his preaching to deviate from the doctrines contained in the Confession of Faith of the Presbyterian Church, which we believe to be perfectly consistent with the word of God; an account of which we enclose to the Rev. Presbytery. Some of us then privately conversed with him on the subject, but to no purpose. We then as a session collectively, conversed with him, but the consequence was that the difference in our opinions was augmented. We continued frequently as individuals to deal with him on more points; but to no other purpose than to make him more zealous in propagating those sentiments which we opposed. And although we endeavored to keep those differences private from the people, yet he frequently made use of such language, when on those points as naturally led the people to understand that there was a difference between him and us, and repeatedly misconstrued our conduct and principles, ridiculing us from the pulpit; though not by name, yet in such language as to convince every attentive person present, who and what he meant. Our influence was hurt, and deviations in doctrine and church discipline increased to such a degree that we could do little or no business in session; and the people over whom we considered ourselves guardians, were some of them sucking in those ideas, which we believed to be dangerous and pernicious. Others of them, from a sense of those dangers, were urging us to take some measures to prevent the

people from being imposed upon. In this situation we were, and the time of the meeting of that Presbytery, to which we deigned to apply for redress, being far distant, we applied to a neighboring Bishop for advice; and finally concluded on a weekday meeting, publicly to vindicate that cause in which we were engaged; and to show wherein Mr. McNemar's doctrine was inconsistent with the doctrine and discipline of our church; and after informing him, before a number of witnesses, of the measures we were going to adopt, and he remaining obstinate, we proceeded to the disagreeable though in our opinion necessary task. And ever being desirous of accommodating the unhappy difference, we lately proposed to Mr. McNemar in the presence of the Rev. John Dunlavy, and Messrs. James Baird and John Donalson, two of his elders, that if he would profess to believe in the doctrine contained in the Confession of Faith of the Presbyterian Church, and that he would propagate and defend the same, and no other in contradiction to them, and be ruled by the book of discipline, that we would then bury all our former differences; that we would return and go hand in hand in countenancing and assisting him, as far as in our power, in his ministry among us. But he replied that our proposals were improper, and that a compliance would be attended with bad consequences, and further added, that he would be bound by no system but the Bible; and that he believed that systems were detrimental to the life and power of religion.

Thus we have given to the Reverend Presbytery a brief account of our situation, and submit the business to your superior judgment, praying that you will take such measures as in your judgment will best establish that faith, once delivered to the saints; and promote the interest and peace of Christ's kingdom among us.

The charges contained in the enclosed statement can be fully substantiated. We are, with due submission, yours, etc.

Joseph Darlington,
Robert Robb,
Robert Robinson.

The following document was also included:

A statement of such doctrines as have been advanced and advocated by Richard McNemar, which are considered to be inconsistent with the word of God, and the constitution of the Presbyterian Church.

1. He reprobated the idea of sinners attempting to pray, or being exhorted thereto, before they were believers in Christ.
2. He has condemned those who urge that convictions are necessary, or that prayer is proper in the sinner.
3. He has expressly declared, at several times, that Christ has purchased salvation for all the human race without distinction.
4. He has expressly declared that a sinner has power to believe in Christ at any time.
5. That a sinner has as much power to act faith, as to act unbelief; and reprobated every idea in contradiction thereto, held by persons of a contrary opinion.
6. He has expressly said, that faith consisted in the creature's persuading himself assuredly, that Christ died for him in particular; that doubting and examining into evidences of faith, were inconsistent with, and contrary to the nature of faith; and in order to establish these sentiments, he explained away these words—Faith is the gift of God, by saying it was Christ Jesus, the object of faith there meant, and not faith itself; and also, these words, 'No man can come to me, except the Father who hath sent me draw him'; by saying that the drawing there meant, was Christ offered in the Gospel; and that the Father knew no other drawing, or higher power, than holding up his Son in the Gospel.

The action of the Presbytery, there being present McNemar,

Kemper and Wallace, and but one elder, Moses Miller, was thus noted:

A letter, with certain other papers, from three of the former elders of Cabin Creek congregation, containing certain charges respecting doctrines, against the Rev. R. McNemar, was presented to Presbytery. Presbytery having taken into consideration the papers from Cabin Creek, concluded it irregular to take any further notice of them; as no person, at present, proposed to substantiate the charges stated in them.

Having thus disposed of the charges, McNemar asked privilege to explain his position. His remarks were not then reduced to writing, but afterward he related the substance of them. With respect to the petition he stated that previous to bringing it forward, that the movers in it, by the advice of a neighboring Bishop, engaged in a public vindication of the Confession of Faith, in which they tried to prove that the general call of the Gospel was inconsistent with the Westminster doctrine of Election, Reprobation and Faith. This discussion greatly contributed to the unhappiness of the congregation and tended to check the revival work in which the church was engaged. Upon the first charge he declared that faith is the first thing God requires of the sinner; and he had no idea of him praying but in faith.

On the second, the question in debate was whether any other convictions are necessary to authorize the soul to believe, than those which arise from the testimony of God in his word.

On the third, Christ is by office the Savior of all men.

On the fourth, the sinner is capable of receiving the testimony of God at any time he heard it.

Concerning the fifth, the sinner is as capable of believing or disbelieving, according to the evidence presented to the views of his mind.

The first part of the sixth, charge is groundless. The second part, that doubting the veracity of God, and looking unto ourselves for evidence, is contrary to Scripture. On the third part, viz., explaining away Scripture, he replied if that was explaining them away, he had done it.

The wise and prudent action of Presbytery suppressed the

flame of opposition, and an agreement during the month of March following was entered into, which took place in the presence of Rev. John E. Finley, and with his approbation, of which the following is a copy:

Whereas, a difference has existed for some time between the Rev. R. McNemar of the one part and Joseph Darlinton, Robert Robb, and Robert Robinson, ruling elders in the congregation of Cabin Creek of the other part, upon certain points of doctrine, which has threatened much evil to that branch of the church:—We having met, and entered into a free and full conversation on the subjects in controversy, do now mutually agree to pass over all past altercations, and cordially unite in communion for the future. In witness whereof, we have herewith set our hands, this 6th day of March, 1802.

Signed by
J. Darlinton,
R. Robb,
Robert Robinson,
John E. Finley,
R. McNemar.

Among persistent men, none are more ungenerous, malignant, clamorous, uncharitable, than the heresy hunter. It may be safely affirmed that the persecuted invariably is nearer the Kingdom than the persecutor. The wedge had been driven in, and, although apparently rendered harmless, it was destined to disunite and prostrate the Presbyterian Church in Ohio, Kentucky and Tennessee. From the blow given it has never been able to recover the proportionate power then sacrificed. The heresy hunter had only been lulled into a temporary sleep.

Mr. McNemar, in the spring of 1802, took charge of Turtle Creek church, four miles west of Lebanon, Ohio. This was the largest and most influential church in Ohio, with the probable exception of the Presbyterian Church in Cincinnati. The people were cordially united, and there was no dissention until Mr. Tichnor, one of the elders, began to object to the doctrines in general. It was believed that he was inspired in this by his particular friend, Rev. James Kemper.

Without ever stating a single objection to Mr. McNemar in private, Mr. Tichnor gave the first notice of his disaffection to a surrounding crowd of careless men, in the interval of public worship. He also tried to poison McNemar's mind against some of the leading members of the congregation. He was seriously taken to task by the session, and advised to state his objections to the doctrine, and place the same regularly before the Presbytery. It now became evident that he had no accurate ideas that anything erroneous had been specifically advanced.

The next session of the Presbytery was held at Cincinnati, October 6-9, 1802, and, although no petition was presented, yet an elder in Mr. Kemper's congregation at Cincinnati arose and entered a verbal complaint against Mr. McNemar, as a propagator of false doctrine; and desired Presbytery to look into it. Mr. McNemar insisted that the measure was out of order, and that the only method by which charges could be heard was by reducing the same to writing. Nevertheless the Presbytery proceeded to what it called examination of Mr. McNemar, on the fundamental doctrines of the Scripture, but in reality it was an inquisition. The following action was taken:

Whereas it has been reported, for more than a year past, that the Rev. Richard McNemar held tenets hostile to the standards of the Presbyterian Church, and subversive of the fundamental doctrines contained in the sacred Scriptures; and whereas these reports have daily become more clamorous, notwithstanding that Mr. McNemar has been warned of these things both privately and more publicly; both by private persons and the members of Presbytery, separately and jointly; therefore the Presbytery have thought it necessary to enter in to a more particular and close examination of Mr. McNemar, on the doctrines of particular election, human depravity, the atonement and the application of it to the sinner, the necessity of the Divine agency in this application, and the nature of faith. Upon which examination had, it is the opinion of this Presbytery that Mr. McNemar holds these doctrines in a sense specifically and essentially different from that sense in which Cal-

vinists do generally believe them, and that his ideas on these subjects are strictly Arminian, though clothed in such expressions and handed out in such a manner, as to keep the body of the people in the dark, and lead them insensibly into Arminian principles, which are dangerous to the souls of men and hostile to the interests of all true religion.

Ordered that a copy of this minute be forwarded by the Stated Clerk, as early as may be, to the churches under our care.

This minute was introduced and carried on the last day of the session. The moderator, Mathew G. Wallace, was absent on account of sickness, and Kemper moved an adjournment to his home, for without his vote the minute could not receive a majority. As McNemar's friends were unaware of the intrigue, the plot succeeded. When the object was manifested, McNemar withdrew from the house, and then Kemper brought forward a written copy of the foregoing minute. About sunset McNemar returned, and after the minute was read to him he declared it was not a fair statement of his sentiments, and expressed his desire that the matter might be referred to the Synod, which was to meet at Lexington, Kentucky, on the ensuing week, but it was not so to be.

Notwithstanding that the action of the Presbytery was to be published to all the churches, yet the extraordinary procedure was taken that although McNemar's teachings were "hostile to the interests of all true religion," he should preach one half of his time at Turtle Creek, two Sundays at Orangedale, two at Clear Creek (just south of Franklin, Ohio); two at Beulah (Beavertown, near Dayton, Ohio); one at the forks of Mad River (Dayton), and the rest at his discretion.

The foregoing minute leaves the impression that the members of the Presbytery acted justly; but McNemar stated that it was otherwise, for he was uniformly treated with shyness, and the principal warnings he had received were of the threatening kind.

At the meeting of the Presbytery at Springfield (Springdale) April 6-11, 1803, a petition was presented saying "the examination of the Rev. Richard McNemar, on the fundamental doctrines of religion; or, on what the petitioners call free-will or Arminian doc-

trines, and also that the Rev. John Thompson undergo the like examination.”

It is but justice to observe that the names on this petition took in an extent of about fifty miles, and found fourteen subscribers, acting solely as individuals, some of whom had never heard either McNemar or Thompson. The record shows:

The petition of Wm. Lamme, John McCabe, John Ewing, Wm. Waugh, John Steele, Jonathan Tichenor, Andrew Small, Fergus McClane, Francis Dill, John Bone, Jonathan Whittaker, Daniel Reeder, James Jones and James Ewing, from the congregations of Beulah, Turtle Creek, Bethany (three miles east of Lebanon, Oh.), Hopewell, Duck Creek, and Cincinnati, was taken up, and the Presbytery determined that it was improper to go into the examination of Mr. McNemar and Mr. Thompson on the prayer of said petitioners, as being out of order.

Against the proceedings of the Presbytery, two of the clergy, with one of their elders, entered the following protest;

Messrs. James Kemper, M. G. Wallace and Stephen Wheeler protest against the proceeding of the Presbytery, in the case of petition of Wm. Lamme and others, praying the reexamination of Mr. McNemar, and also the examination of Mr. Thompson, because the people cannot be deprived of the right of proposing to the Presbytery for discussing such difficulties respecting the doctrines taught them as cannot be settled by the session, and especially because Mr. McNemar’s principles, in particular, now stood condemned by the last meeting of the Presbytery as Arminian. The above named members also protest against the proceedings of the Presbytery in the case of the call to Mr. McNemar, from Turtle Creek, for the above reasons, and especially, because the Presbytery now refuses to pay any attention to McNemar’s principles, or doctrines, notwithstanding the proceedings had at the last meeting of Presbytery, as they appear in our minutes.

In this session Revs. Richard McNemar, John Dunlavy and John Thompson acted in unison.

At the same session a petition from Turtle Creek, signed by sixty persons was presented requesting the whole of Mr. McNemar's time. The same was granted.

The Synod met at Lexington, in Kentucky, and on September 7, 1803, the documents relative to the actions of Presbytery at Cincinnati and Springfield were acted upon. The action of the Presbytery in condemning McNemar at its session at Cincinnati was approved, and the action at Springfield condemned. When the Yeas and Nays were called, Robert Marshall, James Welsh, Barton W. Stone, William Robinson, clergymen, voted in the negative.

This action of the Synod was the final cause of the split in the Presbyterian Church and the beginning of the New Light, or Christian church in the West. At Lexington, September 10, 1803, Robert Marshall, John Dunlavy, Richard McNemar, Barton W. Stone and John Thompson formally withdrew, and organized the Presbytery of Springfield. Not to be out done in this matter, the Synod "suspended them severally from the office of the ministry, and declared their pulpits vacant, and referred them to their several Presbyteries to be restored upon repentance."

In the writings of McNemar I have not found the least trace of any reference to his trials for heresy, nor the difficulties he was forced to encounter owing to the attempted dissensions thrown in his path. Indeed it is a noticeable feature that, in his public writings, he keeps himself almost wholly in the back-ground. The same is true in such of his manuscripts as have come under my inspection.

Chapter Three: The Kentucky Revival

Any history of the Kentucky Revival must be very incomplete that does not fully identify Richard McNemar as the principle mover. Although he has left us the best history of that phenomenal occurrence yet written, one would not suspect from what he has recorded that he had any special relation to it.

It is not necessary here to enter into the full particulars of that religious upheaval, only in so far as McNemar is concerned. Even the great camp-meetings he attended can only be inferred from his narrative. The movement commenced under the preaching of Rev. John Rankin at the old meeting house at Gasper River, five miles below South Union, Logan County, Kentucky, and gradually spread over Kentucky, Ohio, Tennessee, and even as far east as Vermont. The revival is more noted for the remarkable physical manifestations attending it than for anything that was practically effected. However strange the attending phenomena, yet on account of it, the leaders regarded it all as the special work of God.

The physical phenomena accompanying the religious services attracted great crowds, in so much so that the forests became the temple of worship. This was the origin of the camp-meeting, and as the services continued several days, tents were resorted to for protection. The phenomena have thus been described:

The bodily agitations or exercises, attending the excitement in the beginning of this century, were various, and called by various names: the falling exercise; the jerks; the dancing exercise; the barking exercise; the laughing and singing exercise, etc.

The falling exercise was very common among all clas-

ses, the saints and sinners of every age and of every grade, from the philosopher to the clown. The subject of this exercise would, generally, with a piercing scream, fall like a log on the floor, earth, or mud, and appear as dead. ... I have seen very many pious persons fall in the same way from a sense of the danger of their unconverted children, brothers, or sisters—from a sense of the danger of their neighbors, and of the sinful world. I have heard them agonizing in tears and strong men crying for mercy to be shown to sinners, and speaking like angels to all around.

The jerks cannot be so easily described. Sometimes the subject of the jerks would be affected in some one member of the body, and sometimes in the whole system. When the head alone was affected it would be jerked backward and forward, or from side to side, so quickly that the features of the face could not be distinguished. When the whole system was affected, I have seen the person stand in one place, and jerk backward and forward in quick succession, their heads nearly touching the floor behind and before. All classes, saints and sinners, the strong as well as the weak were thus affected. I have inquired of those thus affected. They cannot account for it; but some have told me that those were among the happiest seasons of their lives. I have seen some wicked persons thus affected and all the time cursing the jerks, while they were thrown to earth with violence. Though so awful to behold, I do not remember that any one of the thousands I have seen ever sustained an injury in body. This was as strange as the exercise itself.

The dancing exercise. This generally began with jerks, and was peculiar to professors of religion. The subject, after jerking awhile, began to dance, and then the jerks would cease. Such dancing was indeed heavenly to the spectators; there was nothing in it like levity, nor calculated to excite levity in the beholders. The saints of heaven shown on the countenance of the subject, and

assimilated to angels appeared the whole person. Sometimes the motion was quick and sometimes slow. Thus they continued to move forward and backward in the same track or alley till nature seemed exhausted, and they would fall prostrate on the floor or earth, unless caught by those standing by. While thus exercised, I have heard their solemn praises and prayers ascending to God.

The barking exercise (as opponents contemptuously called it), was nothing but the jerks. A person affected with the jerks, especially in the head, would often make a grunt, or bark, if you please, from the suddenness of the jerk. This name of barking seems to have its origin from an old Presbyterian preacher of East Tennessee. He had gone into the woods for private devotion, and was seized by the jerks. Standing near a sapling, he caught hold of it, to prevent his falling, and as his head jerked back, he uttered a grunt or kind of noise similar to a bark, his face being turned upwards. Some wag discovered him in this position, and reported that he found him barking up a tree.

The laughing exercise was frequent, confined solely with the religious. It was a loud, hearty laughter, but one *sui generis*;¹ it excited laughter in none else. The subject appeared rapturously solemn, and his thoughts excited solemnity in saint and sinners. It is truly indescribable.

The running exercise was nothing more than that persons feeling something of these bodily agitations, through fear, attempted to run away, and thus escape from them; but it commonly happened that they ran not far, before they fell, or became so greatly agitated that they could proceed no farther. ...

I shall close this chapter with *the singing exercise*. This is more unaccountable than anything else I ever saw.

¹ Latin for *unique* or *of one's own kind*.—Editor.

The subject, in a very happy state of mind, would sing most melodiously, not from the mouth or nose, but entirely in the breast, the sounds issuing thence. Such music silenced everything, and attracted the attention of all. It was most heavenly. None could ever be tired of hearing it.

Another writer has described

The rolling exercise: This consisted of being cast down in a violent manner, doubled with the head and feet together, and rolled over and over like a wheel, or stretched in a prostrate manner, turned swiftly over and over like a log. This was considered very debasing and mortifying, especially if the person was taken in this manner through the mud and sullied therewith from head to foot.

The date of the beginning of these scenes was during the month of August 1799 and grew in intensity for several years, and to a certain extent endured for a period of thirty or more years. It has been pointed out that “where these exercises were encouraged, and regarded as tokens of the divine presence, there they greatly prevailed. But when they were looked upon as manifestations of enthusiasm, and fanaticism and therefore opposed, they did not prevail.” It was then due to a hypnotic influence. The effect produced was due to the character of the preaching and singing. Davidson, in his “History of the Presbyterian church in Kentucky,” in speaking of the character of the preaching says:

The style of the discourses varied according to the various dispositions of the speakers. It is impossible to find any particular standard to which all the phenomena can be reduced. Some spoke in a plain, solemn, instructive way; some in a highly decorated style; and others, in a desultory,² incoherent, but kindly manner. There was one class who delighted in alarming the conscience with victories of terror, and launched the thunders of Sinai with inspiring hand. Of this sort were McGready,

² Random, aimless.—Editor.

Rannels, Marshall, Houston, and McNemar. McNemar was desultory, but interspersed many good remarks. He was very animated and impressive and exerted all his powers, both in preaching and singing. He would stamp with his foot, and slap the Bible, and roar ‘Hell and Damnation!’ with a loud voice. But I cannot find that this style of preaching was the most effective. It was such sermons as were delivered with tenderness and tears that elicited the deepest emotions among the audience. The greater the pathos of the speaker, the greater was the ebullition of feeling; and copious floods of tears weakened and prostrated the corporeal organization to such a degree, as to prepare it for operations beyond the ordinary control of the will.

Small children were drawn into the vortex, some of whom became noted as effective speakers. Among these was Vincy, daughter of Richard McNemar. Her father held her on his arm, and sometimes on his shoulder, while she addressed the multitude. As she was born in 1797, she could not have exceeded the age of six at the time of her advent as a public speaker.

The power of song is proverbial. Among the popular songs was that written in 1801 by Richard McNemar, and entitled “*A Pure Church Anticipated*”

The glorious day, is drawing nigh,
When Zion’s light shall come;
She shall arise and shine on high,
Bright as the morning sun.

The north and south their sons resign,
And earth’s foundation bend;
Adorn’d as a bride Jerusalem,
All glorious shall descend.

The king who wears the glorious crown,
The azure flaming bow,
The Holy City shall bring down,
To bless the saints below:

Descending with such melting strains,

Jehovah's name adore;
 Such shouts through earth's extensive plains,
 Were never heard before.

Let Satan rage and boast no more,
 Nor think his reign is long;
 The saints though feeble, weak and poor,
 Their great Redeemer's strong;

In storms he is a hiding place—
 A covert from the wind,
 As a stream from the rock in the wilderness,
 Flows through the weary land,

The crystal stream comes down from heav'n,
 It issues from the throne;
 The floods of strife away are driv'n—
 The Church becomes but one;

That peaceful union they shall know,
 And live upon his love,
 And shout and sing His praise below,
 As angels do above.

The camp-meetings began where the excitement originated. On the edge of a prairie the multitudes came together and encamped on the ground for several nights and days. Various Presbyterian ministers were drawn to the spot, and the enthusiasm there instituted was carried home and diffused to their congregations. The revival became a veritable contagion. By January 30, 1801, it had reached Nashville, Knoxville, and other places in Tennessee.

The first camp-meeting of note began at Cabin Creek, Mason County, Kentucky, May 22, 1801, under the direction of Richard McNemar, and continued four days and three nights. The next was at Concord, in Bourbon County, in May and June, same year, conducted by Barton W. Stone. There were present seven Presbyterian clergymen with a multitude reckoned at 4,000. The next at Eagle Creek, Adams County, Ohio, under John Dunlavy, commencing June 5, and continuing four days and three nights. Following this was one at Pleasant Plain, Kentucky, which, equaled, or even surpassed any that had heretofore been held. The meeting at Indian

Creek, Harrison County, began July 24th, and continued nearly a week. Next came the great meeting at Cane Ridge, seven miles from Paris, beginning August 6th. The number of people on the ground at one time was supposed to have numbered 20,000. The encampment consisted of one hundred and thirty-five wheel-carriages, and tents proportioned to the people. Rev. James Crawford, who kept as accurate account as he could, computed there were 3,000 that fell on that occasion, or an average of 500 a day.

About the middle of June, 1803, a camp-meeting was held near Beavertown, some five miles from Dayton, Ohio. This was during the time when the breach began to widen in the Presbyterian Church. Both factions were in attendance at Beavertown. The only account of this meeting I have seen is in the handwriting of Richard McNemar.

At this meeting Robert Marshall, from Kentucky, with James Kemper, Richard McNemar and John Thompson attended. The most memorable circumstance that is noted of this occasion was, that the people were divided, part held with Kemper, a sober and rigid Calvinist, but the principal part with the other three. It is particularly recollected that on Saturday Mr. Kemper preached from Isa. 22:23, making predestination the nail in a sure place. On Sabbath morning, Marshall followed and literally fulfilled the context, verse 25, for in that day was the nail fastened in the sure place removed, cut down and fell, and the burden that was upon it was cut off. The contest grew so warm and the exercises so powerful that in the afternoon Kemper and his company withdrew from the meeting and retreated homeward. The effect of this meeting served to excite a spirit of free inquiry on the doctrinal points of difference, which ultimately prepared the congregation as a body for the approaching event which was a separation from the government of the Presbyterian church, which took place in the month of September following.

This camp-meeting was followed by another, in the same vicinity, during the last of July 1804, under the direct control of the New Lights with Richard McNemar as the leading spirit.

At this meeting the work was powerful, the gifts and exercises singular, and the light transcendent. The jerking and barking exercises were astounding, and the effects of a sermon preached by McNemar from Zech. 11:7-14 are well-remembered. The breaking the two stones (the creed and form of government) excited the most unbounded enthusiasm.—The breaking to pieces a beautiful System and a beautiful order of government on which millions were resting for support was so emphatically announced and so rhetorically pictured that it seemed as if the old heavens were already passing away with a great noise and the elements melting with fervent heat.

The split in the Synod at Lexington which resulted in the organization of the New Light church, swept every Presbyterian Church in Ohio into the new fold, except Cincinnati, Round Bottom and Duck creek. Even these had been visibly affected. The preachers carried their congregations with them. The Presbyterians called the withdrawing brethren schismatics, but John Thompson, in 1804, gave to the new order of things, the name *New Lights*. This was afterwards repudiated by the sect, who claimed for themselves the title of *Christian*.

Chapter Four: Conversion and New Order

The spring of 1805 found Richard McNemar residing at Turtle Creek, (now Union Village), Ohio, in a hewed double-logged cabin, on his own farm, surrounded by his family. The wife, Jenny, an intelligent, capable, amiable woman, was born in Rowan County, North Carolina, a sister of Judge Francis and Rev. John Dunlavy. To this union were born Benjamin, James, Vincy, Elisha, Nancy, Betsy and Richard.

The Turtle Creek Presbyterian Church had followed Richard into the New Light fold. Over this congregation he presided without a dissenting voice. It was the largest and most influential of all the western churches of its order. Before Richard there appeared to be every prospect of a bright future. His courage and energy had not abated, like a faithful warrior was ever ready to do battle. A camp-meeting had been appointed to be held at Turtle Creek on April 28, 1805, under the direct care of Richard McNemar, which was widely advertised. Before that event Richard was destined to undergo a radical change both in his views and social relations. If his pathway had been thorny before, he was now devoted to undergo vicissitudes,¹ hardships and persecutions he little dreamed of.

There arrived at Turtle Creek, March 22, 1805, three men prepossessing² in appearance, grave and unassuming in their manners, very intelligent, and ready in the Scriptures, and withal³ possessed

¹ Unexpected changes.—Editor.

² Pleasing.—Editor.

³ Additionally.—Editor.

of great boldness in their faith.

Their dress was plain and neat, perfectly uniform and quite old fashioned—white fur hats, crown five inches deep, rim five and a half wide, grey coats, blue waist-coats and overalls of a beautiful brown, —their walk and general carriage sprightly, yet majestically grave, and their affability in conversation banished every idea of superstition or sly deceit.

They came from Mt. Lebanon, N.Y., having traversed on foot a distance of 1,233 miles. They were Issachar Bates, Benjamin S. Youngs and John Meacham. Their mission was to establish Shakerism in the West. They came direct to the house of Malcolm Worley, an opulent, influential man, who had been prominent in religious work. He received the trio, and on the 27th, formally accepted the message of the Shakers.

The three men knew that if they should meet with success they must convert men of prominence. Hence they turned to Richard McNemar. On the 23rd they visited him in his home. They readily detected that he was an unbiased man, and had fully imbibed the idea that the Bible alone should be the resort for religious instruction. He observed that he had never undertaken to build a church and if they had come with that intention he would not stand in the way, but would go to the Gentiles. He probably had imbibed the prevalent idea that during that year Christ would make his visible second appearance. They gained the impression from the conversation that his mind was fruitful soil for their opinions, and began in earnest to convert him. From time to time they held meetings together. During one of these conferences, Richard's son, James, burst into the room and into his father's arms, in a screaming fit. This James was sorely afflicted. While yet in his dresses, his mother missed him and started out in search of her boy. She found him in close proximity to a black snake, the serpent with its head raised and staring the boy in the face. With a piercing scream she seized the child and ran to the house, believing the serpent was close at her heels. Almost fainting she burst into the door. From that day forward James was subjected to screaming fits, which gradually grew worse. Everything known was done for him, but without relief. The only way he could be pacified was by the parent seizing him tightly

and pressing him to the bosom. In time the boy came to learn when the attack was coming on. He would then run to his parent, and was held until the fit passed away. McNemar, holding his child tightly in his arms, said to the missionaries, "If you will cure my child of his malady I will believe your doctrines." This was a test not anticipated. They did not profess to be workers of miracles and, for the time being, uttered no reply. When the silence had become oppressive, the wife, Jenny, arose and said "Let us pray." When the prayer was ended, it was found that James was gone. Search being instituted he was discovered in the yard playing. That was the last attack he ever experienced.

A few days later as Richard was walking in his meadow he saw the arm of a woman reach out from heaven toward him. Looking at it intently he exclaimed "I will follow thee ever."

United with Turtle Creek were the congregations of Salem, and Orangedale. March 31st the preaching was at Salem, where many inquiries were made concerning the strangers, all of which were answered in the sermon, taken from Luke 14:17. The discourse created the first suspicion that McNemar felt union with the visitors. Daniel Doty, James McClure and others took offense, and caviled at the new idea; while Samuel Rollins, James West and others desired to hear more on the subject.

The following Sunday, April 7th, the services were held at Turtle Creek, and the sermon was based on Titus 2:11, with a strong Shaker leaning. At this time individuals and whole families began to look with favor upon Shaker doctrines. Visitors from different places began to call upon McNemar, among whom were John Thompson and Peter Smith, preachers of the New Lights, who tried to correct him, but without avail.

April 21st the meeting was held at Calvin Morrell's, who lived on the great prairie, ten miles west of the Turtle Creek meeting house, and about the center of the Orangedale society. Services were held in the woods, with Bates and Youngs in attendance. The assemblage was large. The text was Matthew 11:3. Richard, "observing, that if they were good men we should profit by their fellowship; but if they were bad men they would not incline to tarry among us." Bates spoke for himself at the close of the discourse, which increased the faith of some and brooked opposition in others.

The general camp-meeting appointed at Turtle Creek for April 28, as usual began on Friday, the 26th. Much depended on McNemar as regarded the order of the meeting, and the rights and privileges of the Shakers; "therefore in order that he might be the better prepared to do his duty on the occasion, it was thought proper that he should previously confess his sins, which was done on Wednesday, April 24th."

Great were the expectations of all for the events of that meeting, as that year had been marked out, by the spirit of prophecy, as pregnant with the final results of the past and present work; which according to the prevailing sense, could be nothing short of the descent of the Holy City from God out of Heaven, and the beginning of the reign of Christ on earth.

A vast multitude assembled; but the chief topic of conversation was the advent of Shakers and their proclamation that Christ had already made his appearance. It proved to be the last of the great revival camp-meetings, for the shock there felt was almost a death blow to the general interest that had prevailed. As Turtle Creek was considered the first and foremost of all societies, it was respected as a safe example in all matters of faith and practice.

The first to take alarm at the advent of the Shakers was John Thompson, in charge of the Springdale congregation. He was indefatigable, and succeeded in saving the New Lights, in the West, from utter ruin. He deserted the cause five years later by turning a back somersault into the Presbyterian fold. Thompson was on hand at the Turtle Creek camp-meeting and created a stormy scene. Issachar Bates who was present thus describes the tumult;

A great body of blazing hot New Lights, with John Thompson at their head, determined to break down all before them. Thompson mounted the stand and began his preachment, and undertook to show how they had been imposed on by deceivers, and how he had borne with one Worley, and how these Eastern men had come to tell us that Christ had made his second appearance (pause); but they are liars, they are liars, they are liars. I will venture to say that the tumult at Ephesus was no

greater than at this place. For about an hour it was one steady cry of glory to Jesus, glory to Jesus, glory to Jesus, and almost every other noise. The cause of their giving glory to Jesus must have been that these poor suffering witnesses were proved to be liars. I stood on a log hard by alone, for I had been ordered back to hell from whence I came, and called all the bad names that they could think of. After the noise had begun to cease I stepped off the log and passed through the multitude, and as I passed they cried out, 'See how his conscience is seared as with a hot iron. He does not regard it at all.'

A wicked man followed John Meacham from place to place, spitting in his face, and crying aloud to make a great fire, and burn these false prophets; some of the foremost, who professed the worthy name, Christian, were at his back, laughing and encouraging him on.

Richard McNemar gives this account of the affair:

Thompson was arraying his forces for battle, and at an early period Friday took the ground, and began the exercise, preparing to give the Believers a warmer reception, as soon as they appeared, and made themselves masters of the encampment. But great was their disappointment when Richard entered the assembly, calmly met the outcry of the multitude and the roaring accusations of his colleague, and filially, called to order, at the same time announcing his right on the ground and his determination to superintend the meeting and administer the sacrament as usual. This was done and the meeting conducted according to circumstances. John preached on Friday, pointedly against the testimony, which was followed with great shout and much glorying in the flesh. Saturday it came Richard's turn. The next was Galatians 6:14. Sabbath, the feast (which was called the Passover) was celebrated; and Monday the closing address was delivered to the Believers from II Samuel 10:12. During the sermon most of the opposition party fled, railing as they went, and so left the des-

pired few, with increasing confidence, to pursue unmolested the peaceful lesson of their way.

The next camp-meeting was held the second Sunday in May at Salem, where most of the Shakers were in attendance. "But such was the growing spirit of animosity, enmity, and abuse, that this meeting resulted in a final separation."

The first regular meeting of the Shakers was held at the house of David Hill, who lived on the ministerial reserve, on May 23, 1805. It was opened by John Meacham with an explanatory address relating to the manners, customs, and economy of the Shakers. Then Issachar Bates pitched up a step song and John Meacham and Benjamin S. Youngs began the dance, in which the new Believers united in some way, so that a variety of exercises were exhibited. The turning exercise was performed in a very striking manner by Polly Kimbel. The society then formed began with one ordained minister, two ordained elders, two licensed exhorters, two physicians, with about thirty other respectable persons. Meetings became public and stated; and, for a time the old meeting house was used, "where they preached, and sang, danced and shouted till the opposing party withdrew and left us in peaceable possession."

The conversion of Richard was soon followed by his wife, Jenny. All their children died at Union Village, except the youngest son, Richard, the only one who left the Shakers. James and Vincy became quite prominent, the former dying in 1875 and the latter in 1878. With the exception of her nose, Vincy resembled very much her father.

The Shakers and their converts now became exceedingly active in the promulgation of their tenets, and followed in the wake of the revival meetings. Church after church tumbled into their laps, and many prominent men were converted among whom were John Dunlavy,⁴ John Rankin, and Mathew Houston. Permanent communities were rapidly formed at Turtle Creek, Beavertown in Ohio, South Union and Pleasant Hill in Kentucky. The Turtle Creek congregation followed McNemar almost bodily into the Shaker order.

The people united their worldly possessions into one. Their interests were in common. The farm of Richard McNemar, which he

⁴ Dunlavy was Richard McNemar's brother-in-law.—Editor.

had purchased in 1802, formed the highest table land in the village, and upon it was located the East Family, with Mathew Houston as elder, and by his choice was made the Gathering Order. A Family continued there until 1836, when its members were scattered among the other villages.

Chapter Five: An Account of Labors and Suffering

The period that Richard McNemar became a Shaker was when Ohio had been a state but two years, and when facilities for travel were in their infancy. The roadways for the most part were trails and bridges but few in number. In the year 1800 Ohio had a population of about 45,000 whites, while Cincinnati contained only 500. In 1800 Kentucky's population was 220,959, and 406,511 in 1810. When considered with the present number of inhabitants these states were but sparsely settled. The country for the most part was a forest with innumerable swamps, and during the winter and spring travel was a great undertaking. The labors of the early Shaker missionaries were then nearly in the wilderness. To establish a new order of church relationship under the greatest of difficulties must require sacrifice, fortitude and intelligence as well as zeal.

It must be regarded as fortunate that David Darrow was placed at the head of affairs. He had been a lieutenant during the American Revolution; was converted to Shakerism towards the close of the war, and gave his lands—now possessed by the North Family, Mt. Lebanon, N.Y.—to the cause he espoused. He arrived at Union Village June 29th, 1805, immediately assumed full charge of affairs, and so continued until his death, in 1825. During the entire period of his administration the chief adviser was McNemar, who was among the foremost in missionary work and establishing the various communities in the West. Where there was a difficulty, legal, or otherwise, Richard McNemar was deputed to manage it. He never hesitated, and almost invariably succeeded in his undertaking. He even became known as “the lion hearted,” so fearless was he in

what he believed to be right.

Many were the missionary journeys he undertook through sufferings and privations. Perhaps the worst was that described by Benjamin S. Youngs, of a trip to the Wabash, in Knox County, Ind., when both Issachar Bates and Richard froze their feet. This journey was accomplished on foot. On Jan. 18th, 1809, Richard McNemar, Issachar Bates and Benjamin S. Youngs started from Union Village, with knapsacks on their backs, directing their course to the mouth of the Kentucky River, encountering both rain and ice. At night they rested on such timber as they were able to secure. On the trail to the Vincennes road, they were forced to cut their way for ten miles without any path. Before reaching the White River they were obliged to wade a stream with the water up to their thighs; and through a rain, slept on a bed of brush. On the 22nd the rain turned to snow, and at night they made a camp of poles. The next morning they faced a keen air. Reaching the White River they found the back water covered with a thin ice. Issachar tied poles to his feet in order to cross over, but broke through. They now encamped until the ice would bear them up. By the 24th provisions ran short, but were saved from hunger by finding a part of a turkey at the opening of a fox's den. On the 25th the ice bore them up, and after reaching the river made a raft. Reaching the other side they passed over five miles of cracking ice, with the snow from five to six inches in depth. For drink they used melted snow; and for a bed, brushes placed on the snow.

The morning of the 26th was very cold, starting early they soon reached the Knobs, and finding they were clear of waters they were so overjoyed that they sang and danced on the first knob; but during the day came to another stream where there was ice and snow for three miles. The 27th they met snow and cold, and over hill and dale travelled 33 miles. On the 29th they nearly perished with cold and were greatly exhausted, but were relieved by a squatter whose wife gave them bear meat, venison, cornbread and coffee. They crossed the Wabash on the 30th, and after struggling through the water and ice for one mile and a half they came upon a camp of Miami Indians, where they partly dried their clothes. After sixteen days of perilous travelling they reached the house of Robert Gill,

and there had their frozen feet poulticed.¹ In that region (Busro or West Union, Knox Co., Ind.) they remained, preaching and proselyting until April 31st, when they started on their return. The whole distance travelled was 235 miles each way.

The itinerary shows Richard to have been exceedingly busy during the planting of Shakerism. I find records showing that he was influential in establishing all the various communities, and in converting those with whom he had formerly associated. It would be impossible, and even not necessary, to make a record of all his missionary journeys. It is recorded that on June 22nd, 1805, in company with Youngs and Malcolm Worley he visited Beaver Creek and remained until the 24th. On March 22nd, 1806, he was again at the same place attended by Bates and Youngs. There was preaching in private houses, and converts reported. While on this visit, John Thompson put in an appearance, and in a discourse proclaimed that the Shakers were “raving wolves in sheep’s clothing.” On July 8th, in company with Bates and Daniel Mosely, another trip was made to Beaver Creek, where the trio tarried until the 14th. On April 26th, 1806, the society was formally recognized by going “forth to worship in the dance,” and the following year the number of Believers was increased to thirty-three.

Eagle Creek (three miles from West Union, Ohio) and Straight Creek (now Georgetown, Ohio) received early recognition; for over their congregation John Dunlavy presided, and at the former place Garner McNemar, brother of Richard, owned a farm. Both congregations were brought into the Shaker fold. The ablest advocates worked persistently among these people. The first Shakers to visit Eagle Creek were David Spinning and Youngs who left Union Village June 27th, 1805 for Kentucky, via Eagle Creek. Accompanied on their return from Kentucky by Bates and McNemar, they reached Eagle Creek July 26th. Three days later the Rev. John Dunlavy became a convert. The vicinity of Eagle Creek was again visited on August 8th, 1805, by McNemar, Bates and Worley, while on their way to Kentucky. By this time the principle people at Eagle Creek had embraced the Shaker faith. On December 31st, McNemar, Bates and Youngs reached the neighborhood, and on the

¹ The practice of putting warm, wet compresses onto an injury to ease pain and increase blood circulation, thus aiding in healing.—Editor.

following Sunday addressed an audience of 60 of whom 30 were Believers. After visiting the several families, and holding meetings, the missionaries proceeded to Kentucky, but returned March 5th, 1806. July 30th, McNemar and Bates arrived at Eagle Creek and remained until August 9th. On December 9th McNemar, David Darrow, Bates, and Solomon King arrived at the Settlement and returned to Union Village on the 25th. On May 23rd, 1807, McNemar, David Spinning and Samuel Rollins made a visit—the Believers now numbering 90 souls. In 1810 it was determined to purchase 1000 acres of land between Eagle Creek and Straight Creek, but this was abandoned and the decree went forth that a part of the society should be moved to Union Village, and the rest to Busro (West Union), Knox Co., Ind., where many converts had been gathered.

McNemar was among the earliest advocates at Busro. In company with Archibald Meacham he started for that frontier March 27th, 1810, and on May 10th started for Union Village, accompanied by John Slover, son of the famous scout and Indian fighter of the same name, who was in Crawford's Campaign. Both father and son died Shakers and are buried at South Union, Kentucky.

March 17th, 1807, in company with Darrow and Youngs, Richard started for the Indian encampment, at Greenville, Ohio, on a mission, where he arrived on the 23rd, and started on the return trip the 27th. As the Indians returned this visit, it caused the Shakers much trouble, because the evilly disposed took advantage of it by inflaming the minds of the settlers against Believers.

April 9th, 1811, Richard set out on a mission through Kentucky, and returned August 2nd; June 1st, 1812, visited the Governor of the State at Dayton respecting military matters that concerned the Shakers; March 8th, 1813, he went to Beaver Creek, (then called Watervleit), where he was taken sick, and on the 16th was brought home by Nathan Sharp.

In the establishment of the Whitewater community McNemar was a prominent factor. The people were mostly gathered from Darby Plains, Union County, Ohio. The settlement there was first visited by McNemar and Calvin Morrell during the month of June, 1820. On the following day after their arrival they addressed, in a grove, a public meeting. The third day they returned to Union Vil-

lage. January 8th, 1823, McNemar and Bates started for the Plains and remained until the 24th. Early in 1824 the people were removed to Whitewater in Hamilton County, Ohio. During his life McNemar took great interest in this people.

In the beginning of the existence of the community near Cleveland, Richard McNemar, along with Richard W. Pelham, James Hodge, Anna Boyd and Betsey Dunlavy were deputed to proceed from Union Village and organize the Believers into a common family, to be known in reference to the parent as "North Union."

The rapid stride made by the Shakers between the years 1805 and 1810 was the cause of great alarm among the sects. So long as the inroads were made upon the domain of the New Light, or Christian Church, the discomfiture of the latter was greatly enjoyed by the other sects; but when visible success was made in other folds, then all united to put down the Shakers. Slander, of the most outrageous and indecent kind was resorted to and McNemar's character was assailed.

The dissatisfaction finally culminated in the mob that assembled at Union Village, August 27th, 1810. Active in this mob, and Chief spokesman, was Rev. Mathew G. Wallace. A company of light horsemen from Springdale was in the array. There were five hundred men in military order, led by their officers, that swooped down upon the peaceable villagers besides fifteen hundred others. Richard McNemar boldly confronted one of the leaders, Col. James Smith. This Smith had been a Presbyterian, then a New Light preacher, then a Shaker, and then an apostate. Judge Francis Dunlavy was on hand and commanded the peace and ordered the mob to disperse. The Shaker houses were searched, and after much persuasion from disinterested parties, the mob quietly dispersed. The announced purpose of the mob was to tar and feather Richard McNemar, drive those Shakers who had come from the East out of the country, and break up the community.

The year 1817 was fruitful in disturbances at Union Village. *The Western Star*, published at Lebanon, became very vindictive towards the Shakers, and one of the editors published a scurrilous pamphlet against them. On July 31st, under pretense of law, a scene of mobbing and rioting was perpetrated. The excuse made was to obtain Jonathan Davis, a youth who had been given to the Society

by his father. When the mob appeared the boy was on the eve-trough,² of what is now the Office, painting. McNemar was likewise painting the building, but rested on a ladder. When the boy discerned the mob approaching he divined their errand, slid down the corner of the building, ran to the Mill Family and there hid until after nightfall. When the mob came in front of the building McNemar began to preach to them in poetry and thus continued for a space of two hours. This caused a feeling of good humor in the majority who came into the yard, and there they rested on the grass until the conclusion of the discourse—McNemar meanwhile remaining on the ladder. McNemar and some others were indicted by the grand jury, and some litigation grew out of the retaining of the boy. On December 3rd, following, McNemar and Calvin Morrell went to Columbus in order to present a remonstrance to the legislature against the persecution by the *Western Star*.

It was about this time that a command from heaven was received by a visionist³ that a curse should be placed upon Lebanon, Ohio, on account of the persecution its inhabitants had dealt out to the Shakers, and a blessing on Dayton because of favors shown. The lot fell to McNemar and Francis Bedle. The former opposed the scheme and said it should be passed over; but, in obedience to David Darrow, reluctantly consented. Early in the morning the two messengers together appeared on the principal street of Lebanon, on horseback, waved their hats and pronounced woe upon all persecutors. In the afternoon they appeared in Dayton, waived their hats and pronounced blessings on all denizens⁴ thereof. News of this action of the Shakers wafted over the banks and hills of the Miami and Mad Rivers. Up to that time Dayton had made slow progress. The people having been thus blessed, the farmers sold or rented their lands, moved into the town, which gave it an impetus that has remained even unto the present time.

There is an instance recorded when McNemar forgot his profession of non-resistance. Issachar Bates returned late on Saturday night in August, 1808, with a package of money. This was discov-

² Soffit.—Editor.

³ The Shakers believed that certain "Believers" could receive revelations and direct messages from heaven. They called these people "visionists."—Editor.

⁴ Residents.—Editor.

ered by a band of thieves, who broke into the house for the purpose of seizing the money. Fortunately Bates had it carefully concealed so that only six dollars were secured. The robbers broke open doors and cupboards and awakened all the sleepers. McNemar slept in the garret and being awakened and realizing the situation hurled a chair upon the thieves, and by his intrepidity succeeded in driving out the intruders. The next morning, being Sunday, he composed and sang in the church meeting the following composition:

Will a man rob God? Said the prophet of old—
Can the sons of the whore be so wicked and bold?
This question is answered, the thing has been done—
We have witnessed the fact since the last setting sun.

The church was beset by a black painted band,
With their candles and clubs and their pistols in hand;
Twelve strokes of the clock told the dark silent hour,
When those wretches came rushing like wolves to devour.

With their pistols presented they entered each room,
Crying, 'Give us your money, or death is your doom!'
Beset by such monsters determined to kill,
Our good Elder brethren all chose to be still.

With threats and menaces they searched around—
The chests they broke open and took all they found:
Till a chair from the garrett struck one on the head;
Then the stairs they descended and hastily fled.

Ye lucrative monsters! ye fiends in disguise!
How great was your trouble! how small was your prize!
How careful kind heaven your scheme to defeat!
And how thankful the saints when they saw your retreat!

Such mischievous wretches let statesmen pursue—
Believers have got something better to do;
By their faith and obedience the nations they'll heal,
And lay up a good treasure which thieves cannot steal.

Chapter Six: Travels and Special Missions

The travels or journeys of Richard McNemar were frequent, arduous, and sometimes very long, most of which were accomplished on foot. The time that he visited Mount Lebanon, New York, on his first trip, may be determined from the outline of a poem, addressed to Mother Lucy Wright.¹ This would fix it in the year 1811. The closing stanza of this draft reads:

The world hates the name of the Old McNemar,
And threatens to coat him with feathers and tar.
But his name and nature may go to the ditch,
I'll cleave to my Mother and call myself Rich.

The threat of “tar and feathers” of the Mob of 1810, was fresh in his mind. By direction of David Darrow he went to Mount Lebanon on special business concerning the ministry, and on arriving there was assigned quarters in the Office. While transacting his mission he received a summons from Mother Lucy Wright to visit her at her rooms before his departure. By an Office trustee Richard was ushered into the room of the Ministry Sisters, who introduced him as “an author, the brightest of preachers, and now an envoy from the fair western country.” The two sisters heartily greeted and welcomed him to their presence. Mother Lucy stated that she desired especially for him to describe his views relative to Christ’s Second appearing on the earth, and his “opinion of the manifestations pervading the wonderful power of the Kentucky revival,” for

¹ Lucy Wright was the leader of the Shakers during this time. —Editor.

both of the sisters had read his book on that subject. Richard expressed his views without reservation on the subjects indicated, and went on at length to vindicate what he had stated in his book, "The Kentucky Revival," and from time to time would stop that the sisters might make such observations as they desired. But they did not wish to express opinions, as they were intent solely on listening, and evinced the closest attention. The views put forth on Christ's second appearing greatly encouraged Mother Lucy. When he had concluded, he was commanded to "tell us all your experience of life as far as you might feel to impart. Tell us more than we can clearly know from any reports and remote information. Tell us without any restraint of your guidings leading up to the day in which you were found (March 23rd, 1805) by the eastern brethren in the midst of your family circle."

After all the information desired had been imparted, Mother Lucy said unto Richard: "I make you a High Priest in Zion. I give you a new name. I call you Elder Eleazar Right, because you understand Mother's gospel right."

"I am delighted with my new name," Richard responded; "but would like to have it one letter longer." Mother Lucy not seeming to notice the request, Richard turned to the other sister and said, "That letter is W, and I will call myself Eleazar Wright." "You are welcome to add the letter W, [in order] to own Mother's name, and so become another one in the file of her many namesakes," said the sister. After expressing to the Sisters his grateful thanks for the happiest visit of his life, Richard withdrew from their presence.

When Richard's mission had been accomplished and preparations for his return journey were being made, both brethren and sisters came to his room to hear more from his lips. When the hour for departure arrived he passed from the Office to the front gate, where he encountered a large friendly crowd all of whom individually bade him farewell and expressed their kindest regards. Mounting his steed and adjusting his saddle-bags, he rode up to the fence and once more viewed the friendly faces, reluctant to leave them. In that assemblage were the Ministry, the elders of the Church Family, the Office officers as well as many others. Just then a brother rode up and announced to Richard that he had been honored by being appointed to accompany him home. It was a comforting thought to

Elder Eleazer that the brother designated to be his companion was the one he had greatly admired as the special attendant during his sojourn at the Office.

When the two horsemen arrived at the Center House gate, Union Village, the people came swarming out to greet them, and the family at the Brick House ran forth with joyful expressions of welcome, and all joined in a song composed for the occasion. When the greetings had subsided the companion led Richard to a point where all could be seen, and then announced that he had brought back their much esteemed and beloved elder, with the new name, Elder Eleazar Wright, by which he should be addressed. Owing to so many Richards and so many of the surname McNemar in the two families the name was pleasing both to brethren and sisters. After this Richard usually signed his letters by the one word: *Eleazar*.

The second trip east was more extended than the first. Richard left Union Village on June 9th, 1829. At Chillicothe he took the boat for Cleveland; from there to Buffalo; thence to Schenectady, and from there to Mt. Lebanon, from Mt. Lebanon to Hancock, Mass. On July 25th, from Canterbury he wrote to the Mt. Lebanon Ministry requesting their advice as to what message he should give the people. August 2nd, he preached to the people at Harvard. This discourse has been preserved and is printed in Hollister's "Pearly Gate Bible Lessons." His diary shows the amount of money contributed personally to him by the various Societies on his route: Enfield, Conn., \$42.50; Hancock, \$15; Canterbury, \$90; Enfield, N.H., \$35; Shirley, \$35. It is probable the Central Ministry had sent for him, because he gives a minute of the "Subjects of conference with the Ministry." The principal themes were difficulties that occurred after the death of David Darrow and the character and esteem in which the Western Ministry were held by the people. He gives the names and ages of the North Family, Mt. Lebanon, and also those of the Canaan Family. He returned via Schenectady, Lyons, Rochester, Buffalo and Cleveland, and arrived home October 1st.

The final revision of the Covenant² was made in 1829, and

² New converts were required to legally sign all of their land to the Shakers. This revised Covenant was something McNemar helped to craft at the request of the leadership in order to avoid future lawsuits and legal entanglements in case former members wanted their land back.—Editor.

Richard McNemar was appointed by the Central Ministry to visit all the Western communities and exert all his powers to induce them to receive it. His diary shows there was much opposition manifested to its acceptance; but he succeeded in overcoming all opposition.

John Dunlavy, in temporary charge of the West Union Community, Knox County, Ind., died September 16th, 1826. On September 25th, Richard was released from the eldership of the Brick House to go and take charge of West Union, where he arrived October 6th following, and at once assumed their entire care. On October 19th he assembled the people and informed them that it was the decision of all the Western Ministry that "all the people should rise once more and move away from Busro, and so abandon the place forever." The cause of this decision was owing to the malaria that afflicted the people. January 1st, 1827 he presented an article of conveyance of all their lands to Nathan Sharp and Francis Vores as trustees, which most of the members signed. He remained in charge until the removal took place, which was March 20th, 1827, when he left, taking a route through Kentucky, and arrived at Union Village on May 4th. Soon after his return he was sent to Pleasant Hill, Kentucky, to look after the interests of that Society in the matter of lawsuits in which it was engaged with seceding members. He had the general oversight and management of the Shaker interests. He remained until the following year.

The Ministry and Elders at Union Village having agreed to send Eleazar to Kentucky as a help in regulating the cause of Believers against sundry lawsuits and other grievances instituted by apostates, on Tuesday March 30, 1830, set out from home and by way of Cincinnati, Port William and Frankfort, arrived at Pleasant Hill April 4th."

April 7th a suit was tried at Harrodsburg, in which the jury hung. In May the new revision of the covenant was presented and the preliminary articles called "Revision" were written. He was also largely engaged in examining papers and entering up matters on the book of records, all of which he had found in great confusion. August 2nd he started for South Union, arriving there on the 6th. Elder Benjamin S. Youngs, then in care of the Society, assigned him

commodious apartments. At once he entered upon the work of preparing court documents for the suit set at Russellville on the 8th, but it was continued until the November term. On the 15th he preached to a large assembly. On the 21st there was a general council of the principal brethren of South Union, twenty in number, to confer with McNemar:

On the course proper to be pursued for the defense of the rights and privileges of the Society, whether in conformity to the act of the legislature of 1828, or according to the order and general rules of the church, and after much freedom of investigation it was unanimously agreed that the said act was to be considered unconstitutional and void, founded on falsehood and misrepresentation and to be disregarded. That in order to meet the unjust attacks of the enemies of the Society on proper ground, it became necessary to attend to the proper organization of all matters on gospel principles which require that a lawful conveyance, transfer and surrender of all personal claims to the consecrated interest of the Church be made to regular trustees by executing a firm covenant. To which all present individually expressed their agreement, and their readiness to enter into those measures whenever it should be considered necessary and proper.

On the 25th Richard set out for Pleasant Hill, and during his stay there it was agreed that a remonstrance should be prepared to the legislature against the Act of 1828 and to have the manuscript "Revision" printed at Harrodsburg.

The suits at Harrodsburg were heard on October 6th, and the Shakers were cast in \$48, "which they mean not to pay." October 12th, Richard started for South Union, and on the 27th printed an address to the legislature, and on the 28th and 29th finished writing and printing the public documents. The suit instituted by John Boon alleged that he had given a \$1000 note instead of one for \$100 as he had intended, and that he did not realize the mistake until sometime after he had paid the same. The suit commenced November 3rd and continued until the 10th, which ended in favor of the Society. Nov. 16th Richard arrived at Pleasant Hill. December 2nd started for

Frankfort and presented the “Remonstrance” to the legislature, and on the 9th returned. On the 20th he started for Frankfort and returned the 23rd. On the 26th there was a conference relative to what Richard should do, either stay and help carry on the lawsuits or leave for home. Opinions were greatly divided,—Benjamin S. Youngs and Richard favoring the latter. January 1st, 1831, Richard drew up the deed of trust of the Pleasant Hill Society’s lands to the trustees, and next day started for Frankfort, where on the 16th, he took the boat, *Volant*, for North Bend. From there he went to Whitewater where he tarried till the 20th. It probably was at this time he carried his trunk on his back from Whitewater to Union Village—some 30 miles.

Of this trip to Kentucky I transcribe McNemar’s own words, as follows:

As the principal object of Eleazar’s last trip to Kentucky was to assist in the line of printing it will be proper to state what particularly occurred relating to that business. It was proposed and agreed that in order to accomplish what other small jobs of printing that might be thought necessary for the defense of the gospel, it might be expedient to procure a sufficient quantity of new types at the Cincinnati foundry, but from the circumstances of the company passing hastily through the town that matter was neglected. So we became dependent on the world, as usual, for executing the job in hand, which gave occasion to what might be called some serious trials. It was first proposed by Eleazar to have the remonstrance printed early and circulated among the members to give time for digesting the subject. This was strenuously opposed by the Ministry, Elders and Trustees. What then? Postpone the printing till just before the Assembly meet, to get it forward before the enemy can get up anything to oppose it. On this point the two Societies were much divided in their feelings. No doubt the Pleasant Hill plan would have been wise enough could the printing have been privately done, but from the public press it unavoidably went out and at that most precarious period excited an opposite

statement calculated to defeat the whole business. At South Union matters were happily managed by means of a small press constructed by Elder Benjamin [Youngs]. While at Pleasant Hill Elder Benjamin expressed a wish to have their general articles printed and wished me to stay and assist. On this subject we had a serious labor, and but for the entire disgust which I had got at attending the world's presses, it would have been done. While at Frankfort this subject occupied considerable conversation, and we agreed that it would be of great importance at this time to have a suitable press in some of our societies for the purpose of executing such jobs and for other purposes, and so the matter was left to be considered at the Center Union, whether at all or where it will be proper for such a thing to be established.

With regard to Eleazar's being sent for the particular purpose of aiding in the management of lawsuits at Pleasant Hill, it proved to be the most perfect abortion. Neither minister, elder, deacon, or member ever once invited him to take any special concern in that business, not even so much as to present a paper, or a thing, or give any statement how matters stood further than as he intruded by way of inquiry. He attended the April court merely as a spectator. At the October term he was not even invited to attend till after the trial was over and the Society was cast in two suits. On the back of all this, his furlough is lengthened out till the February court and great anxiety manifested to have him stay. But when the matter came to be duly considered by the united wisdom of both Societies it was agreed to loose him and let him go, upon this principle that he was identified with no orders or gift in that Society, and that he had during his residence there been accommodated and treated in a manner entirely inconsistent with the views or purposes for which he had been sent. Some apologies were made for those improprieties.

It is further recorded that Richard, during his sojourn at Frank-

fort, in behalf of the Pleasant Hill Society, paid his own expenses, using \$31 of the money he had received from the Eastern Societies during his last sojourn among them. On this point he naively remarks:

On a subsequent occasion Eleazar received at the office, \$25 for spending money, being sent on business to Cincinnati: part of which served for expenses of the journey, and the balance was laid out for types, which left but eleven dollars balance to test the generosity of the honorable trustees.

April 30th, 1831, Richard, in company with Mathew Houston visited the Society of Watervliet, Ohio, in the interests of the revised Covenant. May 1st he gave a discourse in the Church services, an epitome of which is given in his diary. On Monday evening a meeting of Ministers, Elders, and Deacons convened in the garret for the purpose of hearing the Church Covenant. The reasons for adopting the same—only of interest to Believers—are fairly stated. On Wednesday evening the subject was opened for discussion, with reasons for and against given at length when “on motion it was agreed by a general union to refer that matter to the Ministry and so the meeting closed.” To this minute, in October 1834, McNemar notes: “The matter was referred to the Ministry as there was the Ministry then in the meeting, hence it was not to any ministers of God on earth or in heaven that it was referred, but to the ministers of Satan, and sure enough they have had the control of the business ever since.”

May 11th Richard arrived at Whitewater and took lodging in the meeting house. His journal is quite lengthy relative to the investigations entered into concerning the internal affairs of the Society. May 17th, he left for Union Village. On the 24th he again appeared at Whitewater, the burden of which appeared to have been to release Calvin Morrell from his office and send him to Union Village, on the plea of old age. Calvin complained bitterly to Archibald Meacham about being “scrouged out,” which the latter repeated to Richard, and thus he replied:

He is not the first that has been scrouged out by one who could not hold his own people together. Jesus has

been a mighty scrouger and has scrouged many a fellow out of his nest and it is well-known that he could not hold his own people together, they all forsook him and fled. St. Paul was another scrouger, and what became of all they of Asia; what became of Demas and all the rest who loved this present world? If the unbelieving depart this will not disqualify a faithful shepherd from protecting the sheep, but if any professed minister of Christ should avail himself of the gift committed to him to gather a church, society or people of his own, it need not be thought strange if a stranger should come upon him and take from him his armor wherein he trusted and divided the spoil. Where then is the damage if Calvin is robbed and spoiled and scrouged out and separated from the people that he considered his own?

Issachar Bates took charge of the Watervleit, Ohio, community October 24th, 1824, though he had never felt himself capable of taking the first care of any people. Owing to internal troubles, the position was a difficult one. As he was to stand alone in the Ministry, everything was practically in his hands. Issachar always claimed to have been the founder of the Society, and regarded it as his child. He was greatly desirous that it should be the headquarters of Shakerism in the West. During his administration of affairs, while not successful in that direction, he endeared himself to all the members, who were anxious that his remaining days should be spent with them. Affairs remaining in an entangled condition, Richard McNemar was sent there February 10th, 1832 to “examine their state as respected covenant matters, records, etc.” On April 1st Elder Issachar was released from the care of the Society and Richard appointed in his place. Soon after Issachar started for Kentucky but returned September 16th, 1833. A division arose in the Society, some holding that Issachar was still in charge and others holding that Richard stood first. Elder Archibald Meacham of Whitewater thought Issachar should enter his Society because so long as he “remained on the ground the people would never be gathered to another.” Instead of asserting his authority Richard uniformly acted on the principle:

That he stood only as a help to the order that was, and

has therefore kept Elder Issachar as much forward as express orders and the nature of the case would admit. Hence he has been exposed to censure in the feelings of some as though he was not faithful in holding and exercising the gift committed to him, and keeping up a gift that was obsolete and not profitable to the people. This censorious feeling, however sincere and conscientious, was rather misguided, seeing the gift had been so expressly divided, leaving a part to Elder Issachar, as before stated, and knowing also that would have shown a very impertinent spirit for Eleazar to attempt to scrouge Elder Issachar out of any gift or privilege that was granted him by the ministry. On this ground there have been trial and tribulation on both sides, particularly between Elder Issachar and the sisters, all which might be summed up in a few words without reflecting the least degree of censure on either side. We say that the sisters (whose study and labor day and night is to make Elder Issachar comfortable) have in many cases manifested a wish to have him eased of any burden in the management of affairs,—they have labored to weigh his weakness and infirmities, and place them as an overbalance to any good that could result from his further labors. This they have unwarily breathed out on some occasions, which to Elder Issachar has felt the most cruel and ungrateful and calculated to excite a passion which Solomon says is cruel as the grave. Hence it has sometimes appeared to him as if he was totally set at naught; that this Eldership has conspired against him to cut him off from any part or lot in the matter, and that he might as well retire from their fellowship and seek his union where he could find it, which of course must be with those who had no union with the Elders and had still retained their respect and confidence in him.

It appears that Elder Issachar had many conferences with Elder Richard relative to his grievances, some of which are recorded. On August 24th, 1834 this is given;

In the late discussion of matters with Elder Issachar rela-

tive to his rights and privileges as Elder to every Believer in the West, I explained the title as nearly relating to his seniority in the gospel; that his lot and labor were not in the Eldership at all; that he was called and sent forth as a minister, and had stood as a help to the Ministry in gathering and establishing the church. He said I did not understand him; that he did not mean that he was a regular or active Elder, but that all would have to acknowledge him in that relation. I very cordially admitted that he was and would forever be acknowledged and respected in his proper order and relation to us all and doubtless rewarded for all the good he had done. As to his special relation to this Society he was respected as a father, but first and last our mutual gift and calling had been as helps to the Ministry. [This he had repeatedly stated as a special communication from F.D. (David Darrow) in his words; that he, F.D., had often said, you and Eleazar are my ministers]. Accordingly I proposed the real state of the case to be as follows, and to which he very cordially agreed: That after his long labor at West Union and return to Union Village, Father (David Darrow) sent him to Watervleit to take the ministerial charge of the Society and ease the burden off him, as he was becoming burdened beyond his strength; that he had filled that lot until the gift came for introducing the new covenant; that at that period I was sent as a help to the present ministry (Union Village Ministry) to ease the burden off them and regulate the Society according to the increase but had not succeeded in accomplishing the work, and therefore we stood in a double capacity, —He was a help to Father David, or the former Ministry, and I as a help to Elder Solomon (King), as the Ministry thus present. In this statement we mutually agreed.

There were four brethren who spoke in the public meeting. It was arranged that Richard and William Phillips should speak on alternate Sundays with Issachar and Henry Miller. This gave Watervliet the two most powerful preachers—McNemar and

Bates—that the Shakers ever had in the West—or even in the East. McNemar’s rule was fortunate in Watervleit, although his remaining there was not in accordance with his desires. He succeeded finally in inducing all to sign the new revision of the covenant and establishing harmony. He looked carefully after their spiritual and temporal welfare, and engaged in literary enterprises. On December 28th, 1835, he was released from his duties at Watervleit, and on January 13th, 1836, in company with Ashbel Kitchell and Malinda Watts left for Union Village. Malinda Watts was regarded as the ablest of the Western sisters. She was a daughter of Judge Kitchell, and sister of Elder Ashbel Kitchell.

Chapter Seven: Literary and Other Industries

It has already been intimated that Richard McNemar was both a poet and an author. His poems were of the fugitive kind, for there is no evidence that he courted the muses, save only as the inspiration seized him, or else to while away such times as dragged heavily on his hands. An instance of the latter is furnished in his diary, where, at Frankfort Ky., waiting on the legislature, to pass the time he composed a poem of forty-eight lines. This poem has never been published. His longest production is called "Slug," of one hundred and sixty-four lines, which is printed in his Selections of 1833. This caught the fancy of Nordhoff, who reproduced it almost entirely in his "Communitic Societies of the United States." His next longest poem was entitled "A Concise Answer to the General Inquiry: Who or What are the Shakers," written in 1808, but never printed until 1823. Every subject of special interest to the Shakers he threw into rhyme and this made it attractive to Believers.

It would be impossible to determine the scope and extent of McNemar's poetical effusions, because many verses were printed anonymously, and he appears to have exercised no care, save in one instance, in preserving those written anterior to 1805. He wrote hymns that were sung during the Kentucky revival, but in the rapid changes which have taken place since, these have gone into oblivion. It was probably due to the great influence of the power of song, recognized in the Kentucky revival, that he continued the art when he entered the Shaker fold. Shaker hymnology owes its origin to the early western converts. It is true these people had music, but it was unaccompanied by words. It may not be susceptible of proof that

McNemar was the father of Shaker hymns, though there is evidence in that direction. He did carry songs into the Shaker church and was a frequent contributor. He exerted his influence, and the Shakers were early noted for their musical powers. The Eastern Shakers kindly took to the innovation, and a variety of hymn books have since been produced.

So far as I know, the first of McNemar's poems published in separate form was in 1823, and called "A Concise Answer." It grew out of an application from an individual in Georgia requesting information concerning the Shakers. This poem at one time was very popular among the Shakers. The editions of 1823 and 1825 appeared at Union Village; also an edition of 1825 at Enfield, N.H.; another at Stockbridge, Mass., in 1825; in 1835 an edition at Hartford, Conn.; one edition at North Union, near Cleveland, in 1841, followed by another in 1844. In 1849 Lorenzo D. Grosvenor enlarged and published it both in pamphlet and circular form at South Groton, Mass.

In 1829 appeared two of Richard McNemar's effusions.¹ One is entitled "Thumb Paper and Captain Me Big," the first part ("Captain Me Big") has seventy-two lines, and the other, eight.

Probably about this period his two poems—one commencing "Let names and sects and parties accost my ears no more" and the other "How precious is the way of God," were printed.

Under the pseudonym of Philos Harmoniae, at Watervliet, Ohio, in 1833, McNemar published "A selection of hymns and poems, for the use of Believers." The book is divided into two parts, the first being hymns and the second prose and poetry, consisting of ninety-one hymns and fifty-six poems. His own contributions (indicated by the initials "R.M." and "E.W.") were thirteen hymns and five poems.

At Watervliet, 1835, McNemar, under the pseudonym, E.W. (C.S.), published "A Selection of Choice Poetry New and Old, Doctrinal and Devotional." There are thirty-eight selections, all of which, save six, were probably composed by McNemar. The book has this curious preface:

CAUTION. As we are aware that many of our hymns,

¹ An outpouring of feelings.—Editor.

however edifying to Believers, ought never to fall into the hands of the wicked; and as we would be sorry that our good should be evil spoken of, we hope that all will wisely consider these things. We think that in this case the saying of Christ may not be inapplicable: Give not that which is holy unto dogs; neither cast ye your pearls before swine

And what Newton said of religious experiences, will equally apply to all such sacred things: ‘Like precious swines their taste they lose, Expos’d to open air.—’

Parts one and two of the poem “John the Baptist” in the “Kentucky Revival” belong to McNemar; also the poem that concludes the First, Second and Third editions of “Testimony of Christ’s second appearing.”

It must be conceded that Richard McNemar was the father of Shaker literature. The first production made by the Shakers was a small tract, written by Joseph Meacham, entitled “A Concise Statement of the Principles of the Only true Church of Christ,” to which was added a letter from James Whittaker. This was struck from a press at Bennington, Vt., in 1790. There was no other publication until the appearance of McNemar’s “Kentucky Revival,” which was the first bound volume. It was written at Union Village and printed in Cincinnati. It went to press June 15th, 1807. So far it is the best history of that wonderful religious awakening that has been given to the public. It has been noticed that McNemar keeps back the part he took in those great camp-meetings, nor does he tell that it was his daughter Vincy who was held by her father while she preached to the multitudes until she sank exhausted on his shoulder. Besides the history, the volume contains a brief account of the entrance of Shakerism among the subjects of the revival; the work among the Indians; observations on church government, and *The Last Will and Testament of the Springfield Presbytery*, making in all one hundred and forty-three pages. With a Cincinnati imprint it was published in 1808 at Albany, N.Y., and the same year still another edition at Pittsfield, Mass. In 1837, McNemar prepared two copies for a reprint of what he called the “Third Edition, —Union Village, 1837,” and the other copy: “Union Village—Revised by the author 1837.” This edition was never published owing to the

want of money caused by the defalcation² of Nathan Sharp in 1835, and the necessity for a new residence, which made strict economy imperative. However an edition was printed in New York in 1846. Notwithstanding these various reprints, the book became so scarce that it was reproduced in "*The Manifesto*," commencing in the number for January 1891, and concluded in the issue for July 1892.

Owing to an assault made on the Shakers, in a pamphlet, by Col. James Smith, entitled "*Shakerism Detected*," McNemar published a reply, entitled: "*Shakerism Detected (A pamphlet published by Col. James Smith, of Ky.) Examined and Refuted in Five Propositions.*" It was first published at Lebanon, Ohio, in 1811, and again at Lexington, Ky. It was reprinted at Watervleit, Ohio, in 1833.

In March 1818, McNemar prepared "*An address to the people of Ohio, protesting against a certain clause of the Militia Law, enacted by the Legislature, at their last session; And Shewing the inconsistency of Military power interfering with persons or property consecrated to the pious and benevolent purposes of the Gospel.*" It was printed at Lebanon. It concludes with a poem entitled "Rights, Civil and Sacred, Contrasted."

Owing to "the evil reports and defamatory statements, which for two or three years past, have been circulated through this country, and particularly from the office of *the Western Star*," and "in a pamphlet entitled '*An account of the conduct of the Shakers*,' etc.—published by Van Vleet & Camron, Lebanon, 1818," McNemar prepared "*The Other Side of the Question*," published in Cincinnati, in 1819. The book is in three parts, one and two being reprints of Shaker documents relating to Eunice Chapman and Mary Dyer, and part three (by McNemar), being "An account of the proceedings of Abram Van Vleet, Esq., and his associates, against the said United Society at Union Village, Ohio." The last contains fifty closely printed pages.

In 1823, it was deemed necessary to edit and publish the third edition of "*Testimony of Christ's Second Appearing*," commonly called *the Shaker Bible*. This book was originally written by Benjamin S. Youngs, and the first edition was commenced to be printed June 15th, 1808. There is no positive evidence that any one assisted the author in his undertaking, although it is more than probable that

² A misuse of money by an official who was in charge of it.—Editor.

David Darrow, John Meacham, and Richard McNemar were consulted. Haskett, in his *“Shakerism Unmasked,”* declares that it was regarded as truth in one of the Eastern Societies that the book owed its origin “to the talents and education of McNemar and Worley,” but unfortunately Haskett is not a reliable witness, as his book too frequently demonstrates. The third edition is the work of both McNemar and Youngs. The edition was printed at Union Village. It was commenced June 2nd, 1823, Brownlow Fisher and Joshua Worley at the press and Andrew Burnett and Andrew C. Houston at the case. The press work was finished Saturday, October 4th, 1823. The interesting fact is given us that of the first edition (1808) there were printed fifteen hundred copies; edition 1810, twenty-five hundred, and 1823, three thousand copies. The fourth edition, 1854, contained five thousand copies. McNemar is very minute in his reference to the third edition. He gives minutes of all who received copies, numbers bound and unbound, when the binding commenced, how many were bound with deer-skins, how many he individually bound, etc. Among those who received copies were Thomas Jefferson, Henry Clay, John Quincy Adams, Duke of Flanders, son of the Minister of France, State Library, Columbus, and others.

In a previous chapter allusion was made to the documents relating to “Revision” and “Remonstrance,” published in Kentucky in 1829 and 1830, during the time of much litigation and efforts before the legislature. I have never seen a copy of the “Remonstrance,” but own two copies of *“A revision and confirmation of the social compact of the United Society called Shakers, at Pleasant Hill, Kentucky,”* published at Harrodsburg, Ky., 1830. He had great difficulty in securing the press at Harrodsburg, as it had been previously engaged; and when free, McNemar was forced to do much of the work himself. The work was a continuation of what he had commenced in 1828, when he wrote the *“Investigator,”* published in Lexington, in 1828. It was a defense of the Shakers “against sundry charges and legislative proceedings.” With other papers, this was reprinted in New York in 1846. McNemar wrote a supplement to the *“Investigator,”* which is preserved in his diary, of eight pages of closely written manuscript.

The speech of Robert Wickliffe, in defense of the Shakers, de-

livered in the Senate of Kentucky, January 1831, was prepared by McNemar. It was published, same year, at Lebanon, Ohio, reprinted at Frankfort, Ky. in 1832, and again in New York in 1846.

In 1831, at Union Village, McNemar, under the name of E. Wright, published his "*Review of the Most Important Events*" relating to the Shakers in the West. Among other particulars it gives a memorial of all the deceases at Union Village from 1805 to 1831 amounting in all to one hundred and ninety-six, besides twelve others of important personages in other Societies.

No Shaker in the West more keenly felt the power of the printing press than did Richard McNemar. He was insistent in urging the same upon Believers. During the month of January 1831, in reference particularly to the Societies in Kentucky he wrote:

It would seem from the course of events that Believers are likely to be put up to the necessity of using the press for the communication of light in the defense of the gospel beyond what has heretofore been deemed necessary. In the early stages of the work, there has been more freedom of speech than on almost every important occasion the gospel and the sacred rights of Believers could be vindicated *viva voce*.³ But in the East when public difficulties arise we find them obviated in print, pamphlet after pamphlet illustrating and supporting those sacred principles which have long been recognized in the covenants and other writings of the church. In courts of justice it devolves on our hired attorneys to do the speaking, men who collect their force principally from the letter. And it has appeared through the course of our legislation in Kentucky, that from our little blue books they did collect a surprising degree of light and energy. Yet after all this lack of understanding renders it in many cases precarious to trust them with important business, without better information.

In all probability McNemar urged upon the Watervleit Community the necessity of owning a printing outfit, for the members contributed out of their personal savings and purchased types, cases

³ Latin for *with living voice, or by word of mouth*.—Editor.

and a press, which they presented to him, to be held as his personal property. This he took with him on his return to Union Village. The first use he made of his press was to republish, with corrections and additions "*Brief Exposition of the Established Principles of the Believers*." The original of this document embraces twelve pages, while the addition numbers twenty-two. In this revision he was assisted by David Spinning. The pamphlet was put out in 1832. Since then, there have been six different reprints. Of all the pamphlets put out by the Shakers this has been the most popular.

Under the title of "*The Constitution of the United Society of Believers*," in 1833, McNemar published a collection of sundry Shaker covenants, general rules, "*Brief Exposition*," "*Circular Letter*," "*Revision and Confirmation*," poetry etc., embracing one hundred and thirty-eight pages.

In 1834, at Waterleat, he printed and edited a pamphlet presenting the decision of the Kentucky Court of appeals relating to the Shakers. From the pagination of this pamphlet and that used in his "*Constitutions*," it is evident he intended to comprehend many things in one large book, which, for some reason, now unknown, was abandoned.

In 1824 McNemar prepared for publication "*The Moderator, or Only Safe Medium Between the Old and New Manner of Doctoring*." The manuscript contains thirty-four closely written pages. Why it was not printed is unknown.

McNemar not only kept a day-book but also a diary, fragments of which only remain. That part now existing at Union Village was found dismembered in a waste basket by an aged sister, who carefully preserved the remains.

As McNemar was very minute in details, it is more than probable he kept a correct account of all the publications he was engaged in. This may he proved in his accounts of the third edition of "*Christ's Second Appearing*," already referred to, and also from his memorandum of January 14th, 1831, when he had on hands "Revisions 242; Memoriais 312," but at that time distributed at Pleasant Hill 74 of each, leaving 238 of the latter and 168 of the former. So then we do not know what was the size of any of the editions of the books which he printed. It is more than probable that all were small. This is one of the reasons why his books are now scarce, and a

premium is readily paid for any of them.

Richard McNemar was the father of journalism among the Shakers. To preserve the more important facts he started "*The Western Review*," which was printed on his Watervleit press. He was editor, type-setter and pressman. Of this journal I know but little. I have a complete number of 24 pages, published December 4, 1834, which is wholly devoted to the life and labors of David Darrow. No. VII printed July 15th, 1837, contains a friendly letter to Alexander Mitchell of Eaton, Ohio, and a revival hymn of 1801. I also have a long article taken from the "*Western Review* Vol. 3, p. 203."

Nor did all his labors interfere with his preaching. Whatever might have been the cause of his journey, the people were ever anxious to hear him, and on the following Sunday and in the family worship he was the chief speaker.

It was the usual arrangement that at the close of the circular worship (round quick dance, and marching two side by side) and the assembly scattered to seats surrounding the room, time was given to anyone who might feel impressed to offer their testimony. In the silent moments of waiting, I yet seem to see Richard McNemar, one amongst those who rose at times to contribute their mite of spiritual gifts into the household of faith. To see Richard rise from his seat, step to the head of the aisle, then speaking at more or less length, and always adding to the interest of the occasion, impressed the observer both by his manner and matter. Most of his discourses terminated in pleasing tones of poetical lines. Then he would strike up some favorite song and starting the march up and down the church aisle, his hands and his feet timing his voice while tracing the space back and forth, singing his song all alone. As he thus worshipped he looked tall, more spare than fleshy. His form was erect, shoulders square, his head large and clad in a wealth of heavy straight black hair, combed smoothly down from the crown and evenly hanging across the back of his neck, touching his white collar. Now turning with face to the east in his march

up the aisle, his visage in enraptured glow, his eyes upturned as drawing unction divine, and so inspiring his manifestations in the force of his zeal, that it almost seemed the heavens were opened to his survey.

I distinctly remember the song, when thus engaged, I heard him sing, which was composed by himself:

‘My robe is new, my crown is bright,
I’m happy blest and free:
I feel as little as a mite
As lively as a bee.
I sip the honey from the flower
That grows in Zion’s yale,
I smell the odor from the bower
That floats upon the gale.’

Richard, thus marched along the aisle and sang his song, his unbuttoned coat hung long and loose, disclosed his jacket and uniform church meeting suit of home-made texture of blue-broadcloth; his eyes large and of a deep blue and full, his eyebrows long and wider than usually seen, but not overhanging; nose long, thin and inclined to the Roman, and full and prominent chin, greatly impressed my childish mind. The vision is just as clear to me today as it was when I last saw and heard him in the meeting house.

Richard McNemar was a man of prayer and fully believed in its efficacy. It was ever the true guiding light in which he supremely and faithfully trusted. It was well-known and often alluded to, that he made it an uncompromising rule, that whenever he was appointed to go out on a preaching tour, or on legal business, his time was so arranged that when he was dressed and all the equipments for the journey were in readiness, he still had one-half hour to spare in communion with his God. In her youth, the daughter, Vincy, went to him in the evening, crying and said to him, “I have had bad luck all day in everything that I have tried to do.” Attentively listening to her lament, he turned in her face a strong, searching look of concern, “fairly burning conviction into her conscience, by feeling that something wrong in herself might have been the main cause of all

her mistakes through the day,” as she long after related. He finally inquired of her, after his long studied look into her countenance: “Vincy did you kneel this morning when you first arose from your bed?” “O nay,” she acknowledged, “I was in a hurry to get to the kitchen and forgot it.” To this he replied: “If I did not kneel in prayer when first getting up in the morning and ask God’s blessing for the day, I should not expect to have it.”

On December 19th, 1838, in the church meeting, Richard offered up a prayer of thanksgiving which so impressed the people that two of the leading brethren waited upon him, in his room, and requested him to reduce it to writing. The following is a transcript:

Mighty God, Father of all mercies, we humbly thank Thee for all Thy goodness and loving kindness to us and to all the creation to which we are a part. We bless Thee for our being, our preservation and all the comforts and blessings of life, national, social, special and individual; but above all for the gospel of salvation by which we are called and separated from the nations of the earth to be a consecrated and happy people, to do Thy will in earth as it is done in heaven. We humbly acknowledge Thy gracious providence in celebrating the free and liberal government of these United States, and those just and impartial laws under which we are permitted to live according to our faith and conscience to serve Thee with our bodies and our spirits which are Thine, and none to make us afraid. May we, O God, learn to prize and wisely improve these, our great and precious privileges, to Thy honor and glory, our own comfort and salvation, and the good and the benefit of mankind. And considering ourselves only stewards of Thy manifold gifts and blessings, may our hearts ever be open to relieve the wants of the poor and needy according to the abilities Thou hast given, that we may show forth Thy praise, not only in word and in tongue, but in deed and in truth, by the fruits of holiness and goodness in our daily lives and conversation, through our spiritual and heavenly parents, who are one with

Thee, blessed forever, world without end. Amen.⁴

In all that tended to the welfare of his fellow man, Richard took an early and active part. His poem against intemperance must rank among the first produced. It is preserved in the “*Selection of Hymns and Poems*,” and composed in 1817, under the title, “*Intemperance Abdicated*.”

From all intoxicating drink
Ancient Believers did abstain:
Then say good brethren do you think
That such a cross was all in vain?

Inebriation we allow
First pav'd the way for am'rous deeds,
Then why should pois'nous spirits now
Be ranked among our common needs?

As an apothecary drug
Its wond'rous virtues some will plead,
And hence we find the stupid Slug
A morning dram does often need.

Fatigue, or want of appetite,
At noon will crave a little more,
And so the same complaints at night,
Are just as ardent as before.

By want of sleep, and this and that,
His thirst for liquor is increas'd,
Till he becomes a bloated sot—
The very scarlet colored beast.

Why then should any soul insist
On such pernicious, pois'nous stuff!
Malignant Spirits, you're dismissed!
You have possessed us long enough.

It is true that Shakers upheld McNemar in his temperance atti-

⁴ The original transcript was not uniform, sometimes capitalizing “Thee” and “Thou,” while other times not. It has been uniformly capitalized in this edition.—Editor.

tude, for it was one of their cardinal principles. Father Job Bishop, among the first converts made by Ann Lee, stated: "We do not use ardent spirits in any common way at all." The following was a church rule: "All spirituous liquors should be kept under the care of the nurses—that no drams, in any case whatever, should be dispensed to persons in common health, and that frivolous excuses of being unwell should not be admitted."

Rickard McNemar was never known to be idle. His literary work was done at odd moments or at such times when he was away, and business did not press itself upon him. In handicraft but few excelled him, as is testified to by much of his labor that still remains. He was just as much at home in the workshop, as in the pulpit, the elder's lot, or with his pen. Besides his manifold duties as a help for the ministry, he found time to exercise his ingenuity as a workman. As a mechanic he could construct a lathe, make a chair, bind a book or weave cloth. From November 15th, 1813, to December, 1817, he manufactured 757 chairs, 20 big wheels, 20 little wheels, 20 reels, besides spools and whirls. Up to April 15th, 1820, he had made 1,366 chairs and from that time until May, 1821, the number was 1,463. I own a chair he made for David Darrow. It is strong and honestly made. He constructed a weaver's loom and was often engaged in making cloth. He not only bound books for the Shakers, but also for the people of Lebanon, Ohio. I find his books to be just as sound, in their binding, as if recently done.

There must have been many incidents illustrative of McNemar's character, only one of which has reached me. This was frequently related by Charles Hampton, who always laughed loud and heartily over it.

In 1822, the two were sent to open the testimony of Shakers in a distant part of the country, going on foot. One day they passed along the edge of a forest which had a fence separating it from the cleared ground. About the center of the field a man was plowing, and who, upon seeing them, let go his plough, threw up his hands and arms, and yelling at the top of his voice said "Stop! Stop! Stop!" On the run and jump he came towards them. Richard went to the fence and awaited the stranger's arrival. Richard stood in his matchless man-

ners and grace which strongly marked his address and presence, enhanced by being arrayed, as ever was his wont, in the cleanest and neatest attire, when prepared to appear in a gathering of his people. When the stranger drew nigh he carefully looked both over, and then bowing, he commanded: "Prepare to march!" Instantly he wheeled around and retraced his steps. Richard, without a sign of a smile or wasting a word on what had just happened, calmly resumed his onward course. Meanwhile Charles was so full of laughter that in order to suppress it, tried to keep behind, until the fit would pass over.

The trend of Richard's life, as preserved, would indicate that he was seriously inclined. Though he could and did use satire, yet it was upon that class who needed to be stung. With the timid, the young and the sincere he was ever a religious father and friend.

Chapter Eight: Persecution, Expulsion, Triumph, and Death

Only indirectly has it been stated what was McNemar's position in Shakerism. The Ministry in the brethren's lot, until 1825, was filled by David Darrow and Solomon King. As Elder Solomon stood second, his duties were only incidental. The first in the Ministry is practically in sole charge. As all of the Western societies were under David Darrow, it became necessary to delegate his powers into the hands of those in whom he could trust. Sometimes it was necessary to put a Society temporarily in the hands of one person, and again someone was entrusted with a special mission. Such persons were called *helps* to the Ministry, and were thus in the Ministerial order. Such was the position of Richard McNemar. He was a *help* to Darrow until his decease; then to Solomon King until 1836, when the latter resigned and lived at Mount Lebanon.

On the resignation of Solomon King, the position of Richard McNemar became rapidly changed. He was an Elder in another sense. He refused the first eldership at Union Village, owing to his repeated absences from home. However he was always the elder of one of the families at Union Village, usually the one at the Brick House. On his removal from the Watervleit Society, he was released from the eldership entirely, which reduced him to the ranks. He took up his residence at Union Village, as that was his home, and became a member of the Church Family. The elders of this family at that time were Stephen Spinning and Andrew C. Houston. Owing to the high character of Richard McNemar and his untiring services in the mutual cause, and knowing that he would always be busily and righteously engaged, the elders assigned him no special

duties. Richard was welcomed back to his old home, for all rejoiced over his return. He was now easily reached, and counsel could be received from him without difficulty. The continued applications both to him and Malcolm Worley, for advice, encouragement, consolation, and religious instruction, so rapidly increased that both applied to be permitted to live in the Office,¹ which would be more convenient for all parties concerned. The reason why this was denied and the final results must now be told.

Owing to the fact that for a period of over half a century garbled accounts of the expulsion of Richard McNemar have been published by the enemies of the Shakers, I have thought it best herewith to give a full account of the affair, and let the wrong rest where it deservedly belongs.

Freegift Wells, a member of the Watervleit, N.Y. Community was appointed first in the Western Ministry, by the Central, or Mt. Lebanon Ministry. He arrived at Union Village April 27th, 1836, and on that day installed himself as First Minister of the Society. Elder Freegift was a narrow, bigoted, vain, ambitious, self-conceited, jealous man. Why able men who lived at Union Village were not chosen to fill that position can only be accounted for on the ground that Eastern favorites must precede all others. Freegift had some good points, the best of which appears to have been that he was "skilled in the handling of tools from coarse common work to the finest trinket." He could be attentive and kind, and possessed enough shrewdness to rally some to his support.

It is one of the unfortunate phases of human nature to forget or discount the laudable services which have been rendered, and rally to the support of the untried and unknown. A statesman may be one day the nation's adoration, and the next day its execration.² Too often men will turn against their benefactors, the true and tried friends, and rally to the one who offers an inducement or wields power.

Freegift Wells saw the popularity of both McNemar and Worley, and the respect and veneration in which they were held. His

¹ Many Shaker villages had a separate building where the trustees and leaders conducted business. Any Believers needing help in any area would come to this place first.—Editor.

² Curse.—Editor.

jealousy became thoroughly aroused. He was first in position and power, and could not brook the thought that any member of the Society would seek counsel from anyone but himself. A broad-minded man would have been thankful to McNemar and Worley for their willingness to relieve him of some of the burdens of his office. It is not surprising then, that both McNemar and Worley were denied admission to the Office. McNemar's influence and popularity particularly aroused the spirit of Freegift, so much so, that he determined their status must be thoroughly broken. The irritating process and charges were put in force. We shall let Richard speak for himself. The following is an account from his "Day Book," preserved at Mt. Lebanon N.Y.:

U.V. April 18, 1839:

There is at present some serious bearings relative to my state and standing as a member of this United Society at Union Village. Being at this time under suspension for causes not clearly defined according to the common rules of inflicting censure, but through the influence of a visionary spirit that searches and judges the secrets of the heart and from whose sentence there is no appeal.

It [is] being suggested as a principal cause of my exclusion from union that I felt above subject, order, and the rules of the family³ where I reside. To cast some light on the subject, I insert the following extracts from my day book *verbatim et literatim*.⁴

Thursday, January 6, 1837.

I was called to the Ministry's shop to investigate and settle matters with the Elders, Stephen and Andrew. After opening our minds severally in relation to times past, it was admitted that I had been held in rather an uncomfortable situation during the period that I have been here, in consequence of my singular situation in times past being ranked in the order of the Ministry, at least as help. The Elders felt at a loss to admit me under

³ Each Shaker village was called a "family."—Editor.

⁴ Latin, literally meaning *word for word and letter for letter*.—Editor.

their care as a common member and that probably I was not disposed to stoop to their government, and subject myself to their counsel. On this point strict examination was made, whether I had at any time refused to submit to the common order of the family, on which I was fully acquitted as to anything actual; and after cancelling matters on all sides as far as was deemed necessary, it was agreed that the Elders had full right and authority to counsel and direct Eleazar in all matters relating to his labor and his privileges as a member of the family. And if they required anything beyond what he was able to comply with, he had a right to plead his excuse and to open to the Ministry anything whatever consistent with the common rules of freedom; and if any occasion required an appeal to the primary authorities in the East—he was not to be prohibited from making it by letter at any time.

In the course of this labor, inquiry was made relative to the place assigned me in the family, and it appeared that I had not been told where to stand, to labor or to march in meeting, neither where to sit at table. It was questioned whether I would be willing to accept of a place at table that might be assigned me. I replied that I would be willing to accept the lot vacated by Watch or Dragon (two dogs that had been killed a few days before). This passed for a joke.

...

My labor through this summer was various. Some printing, some book binding, but principally chair-making. Everything went smoothly along till about the first of October. They commenced moving off the buildings from the East premises, to which very much opposition was felt among the brethren and sisters, and in which I was (as I might say) irresistibly forced to take a part, which gave me a kind of set-off from the feelings of the leadership (which has admitted of no alleviation). From time to time and from thing to thing I have been held

and treated as an alien and not really a member of the body, not indeed that I ever placed myself in that condition or by any means desired so to be.

...

May 5, 1837.

This is a time of uncommon bearing, particularly from jealousies and misunderstandings, as to my calling and duty. It being clearly understood that in composing the body called the church, I was reserved for the work or service of the Ministry and not incorporated with the rest as a member.

October 7th, 1837.

After dinner I was called to a conference with Elder Freegift and E.B. Stephen, relative to my state and standing. The conversation lasted about three hours, the import of all which was that I never had signed the church covenant; of course was not an orderly member of the body; that I had been reserved for Ministerial services; but since the late change in the leadership, my service was not needed, and therefore I was under no government nor protection; no one had any authority to set me to work; nevertheless that I had worked faithfully at several branches of business, chair-making weaving etc.; but was at the call of any who chose to employ me; that I was charged with no moral evil or disorderly conduct, yet being entirely one side and out of the line of order, members were inquiring what I was about and he (Stephen) could not inform them. Of course they would be waked up to feel against me and hold me at a distance as not united or joined to the body; that this I would not be able to bear, which would render my condition very precarious—indeed exceedingly dangerous; that although I had been instrumental in doing much good, I was evidently in danger of falling and losing my crown. All which was admitted. But what could possibly be done that had not been done or that I was unwilling to do? The first express agreement of January 6th

stands good,—The Elders have had and still have a right to counsel and direct and I have a right to obey or to plead excuse or to appeal to the higher powers; if they do not set me to work I am not to blame for that; if they exclude me from privileges, I have only to submit; and if they release themselves from having anything more to do with me, and give me up to the malice and scorn of a misinformed populace, I have a right to appeal either to the higher authorities of the church or submit myself to the overruling providence of God. But let no lying spirit attempt to rob me of that conscious innocence, simplicity and subjection that I have maintained on to the present date. I have a conscience of my own.

In this narrative there are two points that need special reference. One is the affirmation that McNemar had not signed the covenant of 1828. His name does not appear on the covenant of 1810; but I find the name “Richard McNemar” immediately under that of Issachar Bates, in the Covenant (as printed by himself) adopted at Watervleit, Ohio, in January 1833. But whether or not his name was attached to that of 1829, it was a quibble raised, unworthy of an honorable person, when all circumstances have been considered.

Richard did take decided action when the attempt was made to remove his residence at the East Family. The land was that donated by Richard to the Society, and he always felt a special interest in it. The building was being moved off the premises without his knowledge. He saw the action from his window, and running out called upon the men to desist, with which order they complied.

While Richard was in the midst of his troubles the difficulties were aggravated by one Randolph West, who had been for some years a covenant member. He had learned to imitate Richard’s handwriting, and then wrote scurrilous scraps and placed them where Elder Freegift would be sure to find them. This greatly enraged Freegift, who could not otherwise be persuaded, than that these papers were the product of Richard. To prove this, he sent in various directions for the known chirography of Richard. The greater the attempt to persuade him that Richard was incapable of doing such an act, the greater was his determination to believe that

he was guilty. Eldress Betsey Hastings, who stood first in the Ministry in the Sisters' Lot, thought Freegift foolish to take such a stand. She was too high-minded to deny the accusation, reposing full confidence in Richard's integrity. Richard himself took no part in the matter, holding it to be beneath his notice, nor did his friends take any steps to ferret out the culprit. As a final resort for proof Freegift called on the mediums to have the matter revealed by spirits. Months after the death of Richard, the perpetrator, in an unguarded moment, betrayed himself. Suspicion had never rested upon him. He left the village, and two years later committed suicide by hanging.

During these measures, instituted to a greater or lesser degree by Freegift, not one of which he frowned upon, there was a potent, unseen force steadily at work in his behalf. At Watervleit, N.Y., Spiritualism had broken out during the latter part of the year 1837, through the instrumentality of Ann Maria Goff, and soon after spread through all the Shaker Communities. Reports of spiritual revelations from various Societies, reaching Union Village, greatly excited Freegift's mind. South Union and Pleasant Hill were aglow with visions, which caused wonder at Union Village why they were not so blest. The first intelligent outbreak at Union Village occurred on August 26th, 1838. On that day

Elder Freegift read a letter from the ministry at Pleasant Hill, and after reading, he spoke some concerning this marvelous work of God that was going on in other Societies of Believers, and said confidently that we should be visited in like manner without doubt. After he had concluded a song was pitched up, and shaking commenced, and it appeared almost like electricity; the power of God seemed to shower upon the assembly, and to a number it appeared to be irresistible.

About this time, involuntary exercise, such as jerks, occurred in a few instances. During the latter part of October "several individuals hear heavenly sounds of trumpets, instrumental music, singing, etc." For November 18th, the record states that "the supernatural work of God (which the Shakers still call "Mother's Work" *i.e.*, The Holy Spirit's work) in its new increase, has now broken out into an open flame in the young order of Believers at the West Sec-

tion. The powerful bodily operations and heart-searching conviction that accompanies it, battles all attempts at description.” For November 20th, the record has it that “sometimes the visionist will lie for hours abstracted from things of time.” During the early stages of these manifestations the phenomena consisted in bodily operations, visions, new and heavenly songs, and powerful testimonies “against sin, hypocrisy and insincerity;” but about the beginning of April 1839, the work took a phase which was pushed to an extreme, in several directions, which the leaders appeared unwilling to interfere with or modify. In all probability the most extravagant actions will never be known. Oliver C. Hampton, a pronounced spiritualist, who passed through the siege, which lasted until 1847, in his manuscript, *History of Union Village*, speaks of then as “indiscretions” which were “finally corrected, condoned and reconciled among all parties.” Again he says that “the veil of oblivion” should be drawn over some of the extravagances, and they should “rest in eternal sleep.” And again, “in looking back over the whole ground covered by it, we are able to see many things which happened during its advent that were the consequences of a want of wisdom in the leaders of the Society; yet, when these untoward features are allowed their full weight and measure, there still remains a precious *residuum*,⁵ outweighing all the eccentric, and, in some cases, unfortunate features of their work amongst us.”

To pursue this question any farther would be contrary to the purpose of this narrative, only in so far as Richard McNemar is concerned.

In the community, at this time, was a recent convert, not long arrived from Ireland,—one Margaret O’Brian. She was among the earliest sensitives, and her “gift was most beautiful,” but her art soon became exhausted. Freegift continually hounded her for more revelations, and in order to please him she tried to continue in her art.

During the changing scenes presented by the mediums, Richard McNemar and Malcolm Worley were silent spectators. What were their actual views no one knew, for they neither sanctioned nor opposed the new cult. On the other hand Freegift was in his element, and it was unspeakable pleasure to receive “the baskets of

⁵ A residue, or remainder of something.—Editor.

flowers and rubies, pearls and diamonds the angels sent him through the inspired instruments.” His watchful eye soon detected that neither Richard nor Malcolm took any part in these demonstrations. This was a matter of grave offense, for which he severely reproved the two aged brethren, but without any indications of reformation.

The jealousy felt by Freegift towards Richard and Malcolm was a matter of notoriety in the village. Margaret O'Brian saw that he was provoked at the supposed stubbornness of the two rivals. So, she was suddenly seized with a revelation from Mother Ann Lee,⁶ and in church meeting, in the presence of all the various families, loudly called, “Elder Richard, step forth! I have a revelation from Mother Ann.” Richard arose from his seat and quietly moved into the direct presence of Margaret. The revelation was an upbraiding of the unoffending Richard. When she desisted, without uttering a word, he resumed his seat, as though nothing had happened. Then dancing towards him she struck up a song, which she had composed for the occasion, and in it said, “Your proud spirit shall be brought low.” Freegift was happy. His hated rival had been humiliated before the entire congregation.

Just how far Freegift had a hand in this transaction will never be known. It is probable that Margaret read him closely, and worked upon his vanity. Soon after Mother Ann again took possession of Margaret and revealed, in a family meeting, to the willing ears of Freegift, that Believers made idols out of Richard McNemar, Garner McNemar and Malcolm Worley, and as such they must be removed out of the Society. This revelation was a sweet smelling balm in the nostrils of Freegift,—it was a potion sweeter than honey to his taste. His hated rivals were now to be disgraced and he should be freed from their presence. The edict immediately went forth that these brethren should no longer be numbered among the faithful, nor should they live among the Believers. The community was appalled when they learned of the decision. All felt that a great calamity had befallen them. There was sorrow, crying and despair. Great hot tears rolled down the cheeks

⁶ Ann Lee, an illiterate woman who had been dead for five decades when this incident took place, was the originator of the Shaker movement. Invoking her name was a ploy to avoid any possible appeal within the church.—Editor.

of Eldress Malinda Watts and other sisters who had long realized the true worth of these disgraced brethren. Freegift stood undaunted, a proud victor in the fray. Mother Ann Lee had spoken the word, and for authority, there was the testimony of Margaret O'Brian. Had Margaret rendered any services to Shakerism during her short membership? Yea, verily, she was the mouth piece of Mother Ann, and that should weigh against the thirty-four years of faithful service rendered by Richard, Malcolm and Garner. These brethren had never violated the covenant, and never had waived. They had been tried, even as by fire, and never were found wanting.

If the picture were touched by the hand of romance it would be somewhat after the following similitude: The veteran Richard stood before his prosecutor, judge and executioner, humble in spirit to plead his case and ask a stay of proceedings, while Freegift gloated over his triumph. "Listen, Elder Freegift, I plead with thee to hear me before final action is taken. Pity the sorrows of a poor old man. In less than two years I will have passed the period of man's allotted time on earth—the three score years and ten. It is too late in life for me to struggle for a living. My ways, my thoughts and my manners are those of the Shakers, and the cold world will frown upon me. I must die of starvation. Look to the East and you will see the fairest lands of the Shakers, either East or West. That once was my happy home. I surrendered it to the holy cause; I gave up home and family, and now will you turn me penniless from your midst?" Richard paused for a moment, and then continued: "No one has been more faithful, no one has endured more privations; I have waded through rivers amidst the ice; I have traversed swamps, and plunged through snow and forests; I have frozen my limbs, in the holy cause, and will not this save me from the sentence under which I now rest?" Freegift uttered not a word. "I have sacredly kept the covenant, and have been the trusted servant of Elder David and Elder Solomon. Call together all the Believers in the Western Societies, and even all those in such of the Eastern as I have visited, and ask if there is even one to whom I have been a cause of offense. If they will speak truly they will say that all my actions have inured to their benefit. If counsel was needed, it was just as freely given, and whosoever approached me that one was never turned away. Listen Elder Freegift! I have never eaten the bread of idleness. Wherever I have been, no one has ever seen me idling away my time. When not

engaged as a help to the Ministry I have more than earned my keeping in the workshops. I call thee to witness if I have not been busily engaged weaving cloth, making chairs, and binding books during your brief administration?" Freegift gave no response. "Listen to me a little longer, I pray thee Elder Freegift. In yonder graveyard rest the remains of my beloved children Benjamin, Elisha, and Betsey, and there I expect to bury my beloved wife, Jenny, and there may all my other children ultimately be interred. With my kindred dust I also desire to be entombed. In the course of nature the time is not far distant when I shall be called hence. Will you, O, Elder Freegift, deny me this last boon?" Richard pled in vain. Just as well might he have addressed an image of stone.

Let us turn our eyes in another direction. Some of the visionists were not slow to take advantage of their gifts. At Alfred, Maine, this class early began to make trouble, and declared they were inspired by Mother Ann, and from her the revelation came that such and such a one should be expelled." Elder Elisha Pote, the father of Shakerism in Maine, was still alive, though at a greatly advanced age, yet with a clear mind. When that declaration came he said, "These revelations must be stopped." The medium answered, "It is Mother's voice." Springing up on the floor the venerable father exclaimed, "It is the voice of the mother of harlots!" Then turning to the congregation he proceeded to instruct the people that the Covenant was the basis upon which they should stand; that no revelation received by the visionists could supersede that. At another time an offensive measure was about to be executed in the same Society; the brethren called a meeting by themselves and protested, and gave out word that they would close the Meeting-House; that they would have no Ministry, if the proposition was effected. Immediately the matter was adjusted.

At Mount Lebanon the visionists were not allowed to transcend the authority of the Elders where they resided, although great latitude was permitted them. The messages were of no authority unless approved by the Elders or Ministry.

It is a fundamental principle of our system that the head for the direction of the visible body is our leaders; and no gift or direction from the spirit world has any force without their approbation. That was one test for exclud-

ing disorderly spirits.

While Freegift Wells was rejoicing over his triumph, the souls of Richard, Malcolm, and Garner were serene. They made no outcry, nor plotted treason. Richard was long-headed and all his friends reposed confidence in his judgment. He knew fully the lessons of Shakerism and had an abiding faith in its justice. He knew that Freegift was now in the act of violating both the letter and spirit of the Covenant, as well as the organic law of the State. He determined to place his reliance in the principles of his sect, and to them he looked for redress.

Freegift determined to put the revelations of Margaret into immediate effect, and he would countenance no delay. Garner was old and almost entirely helpless having lost the use of his legs. It was decided to board him in the house of one of the tenants. Malcolm was aged and infirm. Ithamar Johnson was directed to take him to Brown County, and there to hire his board. Ithamar said, in sorrowful tones that this was the greatest trial of his life. Richard was to be dropped in the streets of Lebanon. Out of the magnanimity of his heart Freegift had placed the old hand printing press, given to Richard at Watervleit, in the wagon that was to carry McNemar away. In the streets of Lebanon Richard could earn his living by the aid of his press. Richard had other thoughts; with him he took nothing save that which would supply his immediate wants. Reaching Lebanon he asked the driver to set him out in front of the residence of Judge Francis Dunlavy. The Judge himself responded to the rapping on the door. Richard requested permission to be a guest in his home until he could communicate with Mt. Lebanon. He was welcomed to partake of the hospitality of the Dunlavy home.

Richard wrote a full statement of the recent transactions and forwarded the same to the Central Ministry. Word came back directing him to take his immediate departure for Mt. Lebanon. When he reached that place, the case was placed wholly in the hands of Rufus Bishop, second in the Ministry. This was during the month of June 1839. Rufus dispatched to Watervleit, N.Y., for the expert medium in that Society. She immediately set out for Mt. Lebanon. After her arrival there she took her position close by the side of Richard and Rufus, and then passed into the trance state. She traveled over the journey of Richard. The upshot of the whole matter was

that the expelled brethren should be returned to the community, with a circular letter directing the management of the visionists. The placing of Margaret O'Brian in her proper position so incensed her that she left the Society.

I have put forth every endeavor to discover whether or not any word of censure was passed on Freegift. Common justice would demand his immediate removal. This did not occur until July 1843, when he was recalled to Watervleit, N.Y., to become an elder in one of the families there.

Great were the rejoicings at Union Village when Richard arrived. On the following Sunday the young brethren carried him to the Meeting House in a chair. At the proper time a demand was made that he should address them. On being carried to the center of the floor, he slowly arose and supporting himself by the chair, his eyes filled with tears, he began his message. He recounted some of his labors in their behalf, told them how he loved them, and as the orator proceeded many broke down in tears, and sobbing could be heard from every part of the house. Finally turning towards Freegift and stretching forth his arms, with tears rolling down his cheeks, and with trembling voice, he said "Elder Freegift, I have always loved you. There never has been a moment when I entertained even the least ill-feeling towards you—"

What think you gentle reader? Freegift did not allow the venerable speaker to finish his sentence. Rushing upon him, Freegift threw his arms around Richard, and declared that he had always loved him!!!! I have no words of comment. Let others fill up the blank.

The journey to and from Mt. Lebanon, with all the attendant circumstances, proved too much for Richard McNemar. To this must be added age and a long standing infirmity—weakness of stomach, which also affected his son James and daughter Vincy—which sorely distressed him. Soon after his return Richard passed into the great beyond.

Richard McNemar departed this life at about 8 o'clock, Sunday evening, September 15th, 1839. He lies buried amidst his kindred dust, in the graveyard, marked by tall pines, a little south of the Office at Union Village, in an unmarked and an unknown grave. In the same place rest the remains of all the distinguished dead of Union

Village.

The memorial poem, which Richard McNemar wrote on the death of David Darrow, with a slight change, could be applied to himself:

“He was a cross-bearer, we all must agree;
His faithfulness none can dispute.
Yea, from the beginning, this flowering tree
Could always be known by his fruit.

Among the first plants on American soil,
His standing he firmly maintained,
And shar’d with Believers the labor and toil,
By which gospel freedom was gain’d.”

NOTE.—As an act of justice, it is due Alonzo G. Hollister and Sister Susannah C. Liddell, both Shakers of the old school, and rich in reminiscences, to acknowledge that much of the original matter used in this sketch was furnished by them. Without the timely subscriptions of thirty copies each from Elder Arthur Bruce, East Canterbury, Elder Charles H. Sturr, Whitewater, Eldress Anna White, Mt. Lebanon, Eldress Miriam Offord, Enfield, Eldress Sophia Helfrech Hancock and Sister Aurelia G. Mace, Sabbathday Lake this publication would still be in manuscript.

Franklin, O., June 4, 1905.

Bibliography

Many of the publications of Richard McNemar have passed out of knowledge. Since this book was sent to the printer my attention has been called to No. 418, of my “Bibliography of Shaker Literature,” with the statement that said number should be credited to Richard McNemar; that the discourses were so highly pleasing to David Darrow that he caused them to be published in pamphlet form. The following is as complete a bibliography of Richard’s books as I have been able to compile. When accompanied by an asterisk (*) it shows he was an assistant editor.

**Account of Some of The Proceedings of The Legislatures of The States of Kentucky and New Hampshire, 1828 Etc., In Relation to The People Called Shakers.* New York, Egbert, Hovey & King, printers, 1846. 103 pp. This edition embraces pamphlets Nos. 349, 473, and “some account of the proceedings of the Legislature of New Hampshire in relation to the people called Shakers in 1828.

**The Constitution of The United Societies of Believers (Called Shakers) Containing Sundry Covenants and Articles of Agreement Definitive of The Legal Grounds of The Institution.* [Compiled by Richard McNemar]. Watervleit, (Ohio), 1833. 138 pp..

The Kentucky Revival; Or, a Short History of The Late Extraordinary Outpouring of The Spirit of God in The Western States of America, Agreeably to Scripture Promises and Prophecies Concerning The Latter Day: with A Brief Account of The En-

trance and Progress of What The World Called Shakerism Among The Subjects of The Late Revival In Ohio and Kentucky. Presented to The True Zion Traveller As A Memorial of The Wilderness Journey. Cincinnati: from the press of John W. Browne, 1807. 143 pp. 12 mo. This copy belonged to David Darrow.

**The Other Side of The Question. In Three Parts. I. An Explanation of The Proceedings of Eunice Chapman and The Legislature, Against The United Society, Called Shakers, In The State of New York. II. A Refutation of The False Statements of Mary Dyer Against The Said Society, In The State of New Hampshire. III. An Account of The Proceedings of Abram Van Vleet, Esq., and His Associates, Against The Said United Society at Union Village, Ohio, Comprising A General Vindication of The Character of Mother and The Elders Against The attacks of Public Slander—The Edicts of A Prejudiced Party—and The Misguided Zeal of Lawless Mobs.* Published by order of the United Society of Union Village, Ohio. Cincinnati: Looker, Reynolds & Co., printers, 1819. 164 pp.

A Selection of Hymns and Poems; For The Use of Believers. Collected From Sundry Authors. (by Philos Harmoniae. pseud. of McNemar.) Watervleit, Ohio, 1833. 184 pp,

A Little Selection of Choice Poetry, New and Old, Doctrinal and Devotional, Submitted to The Patronage of The Pious. By E.W. (C.S.) Watervleit, Ohio, 1885. 55 pp.

**The Testimony of Christ's Second Appearing; Containing A General Statement of All Things Pertaining to The Faith and Practice of The Church of God In This Latter Day.* Published in Union by order of the Ministry. Third edition corrected and improved. Union Village, (Ohio): B. Fisher & A. Burnett, printers, 1823. XXXVI. 576 pp.

An Address to The State of Ohio, Protesting Against A Certain Clause of The Militia Law, Enacted By The Legislature, at Their Last Session; and Showing The Inconsistency of Military

Power Interfering with Persons Or Property Consecrated to The Pious and Benevolent Purposes of The Gospel. Lebanon, Ohio: Printed at the office of the Farmer, by George Smith, March 1818. 24 pp.

**A Brief Exposition of The Established Principles and Regulations of The United Society of Believers, Called Shakers, Printed at Albany, In The Year 1830; [Calvin Green and Seth Youngs Wells]; and Now Reprinted, with Sundry Improvements Suggested By The Author.* Watervleit, Ohio, 1832. 36 pp. 12 mo.

A Concise Answer to The General Inquiry Who, Or What Are The Shakers. [By Richard McNemar.] A hymn, composed by Samuel Hooser. Union Village, 1823. 12 pp. 32 mo. (Poem.)

Dialogue Between The Church and The Old Gentle Man (added in later editions of the previous work). Stockbridge, 1826. 16 pp.

**The Decision of The Court of Appeals, (Kentucky), In A Case of Much Interest to Religious Communities In General, and to The Shakers In Particular. to Which Is Prefixed A Brief Illustration of The Grounds of Action.* Dayton, Ohio, 1834. 66 pp.

Investigator; Or, A Defence of The Order, Government and Economy of The United Society Called Shakers, Against Sundry Charges and Legislative Proceedings. Addressed to The Political World By The Society of Believers at Pleasant Hill, Ky. Lexington, Ky.: Smith & Palmer, 1828. 47 pp.

A Friendly Letter to Alexander Mitchell. A Solitary Christian of Eaton, Ohio; In Answer to His "Religious Circular Lately Presented to The Public, Dated June, 1837. Union Village July 15, 1837. [Western Review; No. VII.] Broadside, 8 vol.

The Life and Labors of Father David Darrow. Watervleit, Ohio, 1884. 12 pp. 12 mo. (Western Review.)

Journal of Peter Pease. (A fragment from Western Review. 19-22 pp. from Dec. 5, 1806 to March, 1810.).

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at the same time and place “A Remonstance” to the legislature of Kentucky was published. This I have never seen, nor do I know of a copy.

A Review of The Most Important Events Relating to The Rise and Progress of The United Society of Believers In The West; with Sundry Other Documents Connected with The History of The Society, Collected From Various Journals. (Wright (Eleazer), psued. of R. McNemar). Union Village, Ohio, 1831. 34 pp.

Appendix: A Brief Overview of the Shakers

In order to help get a better grasp on what exactly Richard McNemar converted to, and the beliefs/organization that he was working under, we present to you now a brief overview of the Shakers.¹

Origin

In mid-18th century England, the Quakers were moving towards a more reverent idea of life and worship, and wanting to focus more on the word of God than so-called religious experiences. This offended the Wardleys (James and Jane), who broke off (or were kicked out, depending on whose view you read) and started their own group. This group believed in ecstatic jerky movements as part of worship, and were given the name “Shaking Quakers,” or *Quakers*.

One of the earliest members was Ann Lee, who quickly took over the group. She later went to America and claimed that she—now going by the name *Mother* Ann Lee—was actually the second coming of Jesus Christ. She was illiterate, but was a charismatic speaker and converted some influential people to her views.

Beliefs

Revelations. The Shakers believed that the leader of their cult had the power of divine revelation, but none greater than *Mother* Ann Lee. In the 1800s, several “Believers” also claimed this power,

¹ This Appendix was written by the editor of this work, 2014.

and called themselves “visionists.” However, as some of these so-called *visions* contradicted the beliefs of some in leadership, the official stand was that the revelations were accepted and binding if the eldership of each congregation thought it was acceptable. Otherwise, this “divine” revelation was to be rejected.

Pacifism. The Shakers were pacifists, and refused to engage in military action.

Celibacy. Ann Lee taught (and so “faithful” Shakers believe) that sexual unions are sinful, and so marriage is forbidden, and those already married have to forsake the rights of husbands and wives. This means that the only way Shaker communities could grow is by proselyting.

The Femininity of God. The Shakers believe in God the Father, Jesus the Son, and teach that the Holy Spirit is the Holy *Mother*.

Communism. The Shakers required that new converts sign over all their land to the Shaker cause, and they built up their own self-contained communities—controlled by the official Ministry.

Dancing. The Shakers’ worship services were characterized by dancing, jerking, falling, barking, and twitching. After a while, these supposed Spirit-filled movements became carefully choreographed.

Terminology

Family. This is the local Shaker village community. The Turtle Creek *Family* would be all the members of the Shaker village at Turtle Creek.

Ministry. This was the umbrella term to describe the national leadership of the Shakers, as well as any official leaders ordained over specific Shaker villages.

Believers. This term (always capitalized) was used by the Shakers to describe any other faithful Shaker.

Other Notes

There is only one Shaker community still in existence today, comprising a total of three male members. At its largest, the Shakers numbered 6,000 members.

