

alive the next morning when we left the Mueller's hospitable home, but he was fighting when we pulled him out of the cold water of the spring fed water hole.

We reached home through California, and Jamestown, late that Monday night. We unwrapped the sheet which we had wetted several times that day, and there was the great bluecat, stiff as a stick. He had given up the ghost at last. I skinned and gutted him and cut him into frying size pieces, and placed him in our icebox for fine eating on the following days of that week.

We also had some more squirrels and quail, which we had shot along the road on our way home. I have never forgotten nor regretted that trip to the Osage River. Whether the two boys remember it as well as I do, I doubt very much. That trip really was the first vacation which I had in the ministry. It was the first time that I took the two boys fishing with me, but it was not the last time as they will be able to affirm.

It would be unfair to leave Pleasant Grove without a word of praise and thanks to our many friends there, who supplied our home with many necessities of life. Mrs. Herman Kaiser and my mother-in-law worked for weeks and weeks in cleaning, and tearing, and balling up rags for rag carpeting, which they wove on Mrs. Kaiser's loom. The Henry Knorps never failed in presenting us with at least one half hog, and sometimes with two halves, each winter for as long as we were in Pleasant Grove. The William Hickermann family furnished us with a hind quarter of corn fed beef every winter, and often filled our small hay mow with baled alfalfa hay, and our corn crib with Missouri River bottom grown corn.

For days at a time, the Henry Knorp family, and my mother-in-law, peeled Roman Beauty apples and quartered them, and Mr. Knorp stood out in the frosty backyard of the Knorp home with a steady fire of old fence rails under the thirty gallon copper kettle in which he stirred the peeled and quartered apples with a long-handled hickory-wooden ladle, until at last the boiling heat had turned the agitated cooking fruit into light brown applesauce, or else into dark brown delicious apple butter, which was then turned cooking hot into glass jars to feed the pastor's family during the coming year.

We furnished only the necessary sugar for our share of the delicious product, plus the necessary help in peeling and quartering the fruit, which all came out of the Henry Knorp orchard. We

most certainly appreciated all this kindness shown us by our friends in Pleasant Grove, Missouri, and we hated to leave them when the day of parting came, and we left for Collinsville, Illinois.

I have not said much about my congregation at Jamestown, Missouri. The members of that small congregation gave us no trouble at all. We usually stayed overnight and ate our noonday meals with the Henry Kuhn, or the Fred or August Wilder's families.

The trip up and down the Missouri River Bluffs to Jamestown was scenic and a pleasure, except in the wintertime. Then we had to drive through snowdrifts in the east and west cuts through hilly terrain. On one occasion, before I had bought the second horse, Dolly in her efforts to pull the buggy through a three-foot snowdrift started to take jumps and doing so she broke the whiffle tree. There was nothing left for me to do but to unhitch her, pick up my satchel containing my robe and prayer book, and climb on her back and ride two and one half miles into Jamestown.

I preached to a mere handful of people on the next morning, for the roads were so blocked by snow that the people living out on the farms made no attempt to attend church. In fact, my members in Jamestown were surprised that I had ventured out to serve them.

They insisted that I stay overnight a second time. When on Monday Mr. Willers opened his blacksmith shop, he furnished me with a new whiffle tree for my buggy. I rode back to my stalled buggy and found that in the meantime the road gang had come along and had opened the snowdrift. I found my buggy on the side of the road. After I had made the necessary repairs, I turned the buggy around, hitched Dolly to it, and drove home. I was two hours late for school on that Monday morning, but the children were still there. They did not know what had happened to me, but they knew that I would come along sooner or later.

On another occasion, when I preached at Jamestown on a Sunday afternoon, I was met by a blizzard on my way home in the night. I had two horses this time. I had a lit lantern under my lap robe and the storm curtain up against the driving snow and wind. The lap robe was a heavy plush one, which the school children had given me for my birthday. The storm curtain, made out of heavy oil cloth, was strapped to the foot of the dashboard as well as to the top of the buggy over my head. There was a curtained hole in that

curtain for the lines with which to guide the team, and above that hole an isinglass square window through which I was able to see the road.

The blizzard was from the northwest. It increased in violence from hour to hour, and I had to drive almost squarely into the face of it. Luckily there were no drifts as yet and my team trotted merrily along. But after some time, the team became winded and it took me four long hours to get home.

When at last I reached home, I was so stiff from the cold that I could not open my hands to release the lines. The thermometer had fallen to below zero. My mother-in-law massaged my hands and my brother Lorenz, who was with us in Pleasant Grove since the time mother and the four children had returned from their six-months stay in El Paso, took care of the team. It took hours of sitting behind the red hot heating stove, drinking hot spiced port wine, to thaw me out. But half frozen as I was, the trip left no after effects. There was no school the next morning, for all the roads were drifted shut and the cold was intense.

Pleasant Grove still lingers fondly in my memory, because it was a beautifully hilly wooden country, abounding in black walnut and shell-bark hickory trees. These hillsides were alive with both fox and grey squirrels, quail, and plump cottontail rabbits which furnished our table with fresh meat through the fall and winter months. In the spring of the year, from the last weeks in April to the first part of June, we gathered morels, an eddible variety of mushrooms, and blackberries by the washtubs full. Out of these blackberries, we made barrels of the finest wine, besides the jam and jelly, that mother put up in jars for winter consumption. We took a ten-gallon keg of that blackberry wine along to Collinsville, Indiana, when we left Pleasant Grove.

X

OUR EIGHTEEN MONTHS STAY

IN COLLINSVILLE

We were to have our furniture loaded into a freight car for Collinsville on Monday, January the ninth, and on the same afternoon we were to leave for St. Louis on the afternoon passenger

train. However, a snowstorm blew up that day and our furniture was not loaded on that day. In fact, it was two weeks later before it finally was loaded, for that snowstorm blocked all roads for two weeks before they were opened again. However, Mr. Knorp hauled my family to the depot in Wooldridge and we caught the passenger train for St. Louis.

At St. Louis, I bought tickets for mother, mother-in-law and the children for Decatur, Illinois, where they were to visit until I had found a place in which to live and our furniture had arrived. However, it was a long time before these things were to be. Our country had now also become involved in that first World War. In consequence thereof, war materials and many other commodities had priority rights over the railroads of our nation.

My friends in Wooldridge had finally loaded the freight car with my household goods. Since it was customary at Wooldridge for the farmers of the community to order their supply of flour from the elevator at Wooldridge in the fall, when they delivered their wheat, Mr. Knorp had also ordered a year's supply of the best flour for our needs. This flour, in one hundred pound sacks, also was loaded into my freight car. How fortunate it was that I had this flour purchased and delivered to my home before we had the Government's restrictions passed on the buying of such articles.

Again we were fortunate in having two butchered hogs, crocks of lard, and canned meat and fruit of every kind, all packed away in wooden boxes. But where was our car of goods? The car had been left Wooldridge the last part of January. Four weeks had passed since that time, and still the car had not arrived in Collinsville. I took the bill of lading to the freight depot in Collinsville and sent a tracer, but it was late in March before our freight car at long last was reported on a siding in Collinsville.

The delay was a blessing in disguise, for I still had no home in which to move. Uncle Adam Klein, who had a ten-room parsonage, had rented us three rooms in which to live temporarily. I paid him \$30.00 a month for the use of those three rooms, which were all bedrooms, with no cooking facilities except of Aunt Hermine's kitchen range. Uncle said that we could use two burners of that range on which to do our cooking, for I had my family come home from Decatur at the end of January, mother-in-law included.

The eight of us lived, slept and ate in those four rooms. While we were there, mother was confined for the fifth time. On

Bahr Family

March the nineteenth, 1918, our third daughter, Ruth Virginia, was born.

My brother Lorenz and my two oldest sons, Lorenz and Albert, attended the Lutheran School of uncle's congregation. In that school they picked up scarlet fever from someone and all of the family, except mother and I and mother-in-law, also took it. Since we lived upstairs and came in contact with no one, we did not report the cases to the city health board. When we had Doctor Armbruster in to deliver Ruth, he found my two sons in bed with a high fever. He examined them closely and said to me, "Your boys have the scarlet fever, and I will have to quarantine this home." He accepted my plea, to quarantine only the upper story of that home. We used the back stairway to get in and out of our rooms. On this backdoor of the house, he tacked the quarantine notice and that left Uncle and his family free to come and go as they pleased.

I slept in the back bedroom, all my myself, did my own cooking and was told not so much as to peep into the other rooms. Also, we received orders to disinfect everything that came out of the front two bedrooms with a spray of carbolic acid, which Doctor Armbruster prescribed for us.

When our third daughter was born, we had her baptized in Uncle Adam Klein's church on the following Sunday. She received the name Esther Ruth Virginia. Hans Klein and a young kitchen maid in Uncle's home, were the sponsors. I have forgotten her name. We took her because we did not feel right about asking anyone else with scarlet fever then in the family. The maid offered to hold the baby over the baptismal font. She died of tuberculosis not many years later. She was an orphan girl, which Uncle had in his kindness given a home. Ruth is the only one of my children who was not baptized by her father.

When the first of April came and we still had found no rent home, I at last decided to buy a home of my own. A nine-room house was for sale at \$3,000.00. I had to pay three hundred dollars down and twenty-five dollars a month in payments thereafter. That was far cheaper than rent.

Shortly after we bought that home from the widowed former owner, we received word that our car was on the siding in Collinsville. The freight trucks of the Smelting and Refining Company hauled the contents of the freight car and placed everything in our

Bahr Family

newly bought home, into which we moved then with much joy and satisfaction.

In the summer of 1918 our two boys, and my brother Lorenz roamed the hills and valleys around Collinsville, as boys will do. On one such jaunt, they drank water out of what they thought was a spring in a hillside west of town. But this supposed spring was the outlet of sewage disposal. As a result of this drink, Albert came down with a case of typhoid fever. We called Doctor Armbruster and he ordered all of the family to take typhoid shots. The first was not bad at all. However, the second injection made every one of us sick. When the third was to be given, our son Lorenz climbed on top of the chicken house and coal shed, and refused to come down. I had to climb up and carry him down while he screamed at the top of his voice.

I passed out for a moment myself, when I was the last one to receive it and had the needle pushed into my arm. My arm was sore for a week after that, but no one else in the family took typhoid. Albert was at the point of death several times, and in some way he was aware of the fact. For, when he was at his worst, he would permit no one but mother to sit at his bedside and he asked her to sing to him. When she would sing some popular song, he would cry out, "Not that! Not that!" She had to sing church hymns to him. We were all happy when at last the crisis was past and he became his usual self again.

I remained at the Lead Works only about six months. With the payment on the home to be made monthly, even ninety dollars a month was insufficient to live on. The workers in the plant made three and four times what I was getting. Even the helpers got twice as much. I therefore asked for a transfer from the office to the plant. However, that was against the company rules. A plant worker could apply for office work and get it, if he were qualified for such work. But an office employee could not swap his job for work in the plant.

I told the superintendent that I had to make more money. He said he would give me a recommendation and I was to try the Granby Zinc Smelting and Refining Company in East St. Louis, or the Aluminum Company Plant. I therefore left the St. Louis Smelting and Refining Company and went to work as an ore unloader in the Zinc Company. I unloaded ore and coal for about two months, when I was promoted to weighmaster in the ore weighing department. My salary as weighmaster paid me one hundred and sixty-five dollars a month.

It was through the principal of the Lutheran School at Collinsville, a Mr. Gutowski, that I was promoted to weighmaster.

He had held that job from the time his school in Collinsville closed until the first of September when his school opened again. He told his boss about my qualifications for the job, and so I got the promotion.

A month later I qualified for superintendent of one of the desulphuring furnaces of the company, at a pay increase of twenty dollars a month, making my salary one hundred eight-five dollars monthly. Now I was sitting pretty. I reduced my indebtedness substantially during the time.

Then came the Armistice, on the 11th of November of 1918, and with it the government canceled all war orders. When I came to work at 7:00 a. m. on the 19th of November, I found a great printed placard on the gate saying, "This plant is closed until further orders." I went to the office and found that I was out of a job, even as all other workers in the plant. I received the rest of my pay and a recommendation and with that in my pocket I went to the United States Employment Office in St. Louis, and was given a card and told to apply at Swift and Company in East St. Louis, that they were short of packing house employees.

When I arrived at the packing plant, they told me that they had just filled all positions that were open, but they informed me also that Armour and Company were short of night watchment. That packing house was virtually next door to Swift's. I went there and made application for the job of night watchman. After they had read my two recommendations, from the Lead Works and the Granby Zinc Smelting and Refining Company, they told me to report for work that day evening at six o'clock.

The job was a twelve hour shift, and it paid only twenty-five dollars for a seven day week. That was a bitter pill to swallow, but I took the job and held it until the week before Christmas, when I came down with the influenza and for two weeks I hovered between life and death.

When at last I was strong enough to go back to work, my job at the packing house had been filled and I was again a job hunter. Again I went to the United States Employment Office in downtown St. Louis, and there I was told of two openings. A St. Louis millionaire wanted a farm supervisor for his play-time stock farm in St. Louis County, which was stocked with pure bred horses, cows and poultry. I had an interview with the millionaire and he told me that he would

furnish me with a house to live in and all the eggs, milk and poultry that my family required, plus \$75.00 a month. That offer sounded very good to me, but I asked for a day's time to think and talk it over with mother.

We came to the conclusion that since we had bought a home and were still somewhat in debt at Wooldridge, we had better look for something else. I notified the millionaire to that effect and then found a job with the Kroger Baking and Grocery Company of Cincinnati, Ohio. I had applied for storemanagership. This company had about three hundred grocery stores in St. Louis at that time. They put me to work as grocery clerk in one of their stores out on the St. Charles Road, near Clayton, Missouri. From that store I was transferred a few weeks later to the downtown main store of the company.

After a few more weeks, I was given a store to manage for the concern, out on Maryland and Boyle Streets. There I worked all spring and in summer until about August the first. My pay was \$25.00 a week and I bought our groceries at a discount of ten per cent. I liked that kind of work. The store was open from eight in the morning to six in the evening. I had a male clerk and a lady cashier. The store I was working at was in the red when I took over to the tune of about \$1,300.00. I had been told to find out why and that my future with the company would depend on the future profit of the store.

By watching things closely, I found that my clerk had a number of relatives who came into the store about twice a week with market baskets which they filled, and which were then checked out by my lady cashier. I checked the amount registered and a look at the well filled basket told me that there was something wrong. I halted the customer and rechecked what he had in his market basket and found that he was undercharged some six dollars on the transaction. When I confronted the lady cashier with the fact, she broke down crying and confessed that she and the clerk were cousins and that they had worked that racket for many months.

I called headquarters at once and reported my discovery. In less than a half hour, my supervisor came by the store, bringing another clerk and cashier with him. He paid off the two dishonest workers and that ended the stock shortage in that store for as long as I worked there. When I had been with the company for six months, I received a bonus of \$68.00 for having reduced the stock shortage of the store to zero, and for savings in twine and paper bags. For I induced many of my customers to buy chip baskets, selling for a nickle, rather than court trouble by carrying all their purchases in a

large paper bag. In no time at all most of my customers came to the store with the chip basket they had purchased from me to carry home their purchases. That saved much on the large size paper bags into which otherwise we had to pack their groceries.

My store also increased in sales volume within the six months I managed it, from nine hundred to fourteen hundred dollars a week. I liked my work at Krogers, but at the same time I was anxious to get back to the ministry.

While we lived in Collinsville, I helped Uncle Adam Klein once a month in the distribution of Holy Communion. Also, I preached for him as often as he was out of town. When in June of 1918 he went to Texas for a vacation, I preached for him for three Sundays in a row. The Lutheran Church Missouri Synod was experiencing a great shortage of pastors after World War I. Especially in demand were pastors who were qualified to preach in the English language. Also, the congregations were waking up to the fact that they had been paying inadequate salaries to their religious workers. Not only I, but dozens of other pastors had been forced by necessity to resign their work and to do something else in order to make a decent living.

Even Uncle Adam Klein was getting only ninety dollars a month in his large congregation in Collinsville. The members of that congregation, mostly coalminers, were getting ten dollars a day in the meanwhile. Even the church janitor was receiving more pay than was Uncle Adam. In the January meeting of 1919 I shamed the members of the congregation into paying their pastor at least \$115.00 a month besides his rent-free home.

The richest member of the congregation, a banker, was only paying \$36.00 in salary for the year at the time. When a few years later Uncle Adam was called to Springfield, Illinois, the congregation offered him \$150.00 a month if he would stay. However, Uncle accepted the call as Dean of Concordia Seminary after considering the offer for about six weeks. He successfully held that position unto the day of his death.

In the meantime, I received two calls back into the ministry. Both calls came in the same week. The time was May, 1919. One call was from the congregation at Appleton, Missouri. It offered me free house and seven hundred dollars a year in salary. The other call was from White Lake, South Dakota. There were two parishes there, twenty-five miles apart. I was to serve both congregations

every other Sunday. Also, I was asked to live for six months in one parish and then six months in the second parish and teach school all year round. They told me in their letter accompanying the call that the pastor would have to have a team of horses and a spring wagon for the summer, and a sleigh for the winter months, and that he would have to have a fur coat for winter wear. When I wrote and asked them who would have to buy the fuel for the winter and the feed for the team, and who would have to pay the semi-annual moving expenses, they replied, "The pastor will have to pay all such expenses." Those two parishes offered me a combined salary of a thousand dollars a year.

On Uncle Adam's advice, I returned both calls, and then after Uncle Adam came back from his vacation in Texas, I received another call from the Mission Board of the Southern Illinois District of Synod, to St. Matthews Lutheran Church of Brussels, Calhoun County, Illinois. Calhoun County was the fruit growing center of Illinois, and the only county in the state without a railroad. There were at that time no bridges leading out of that county across either the Mississippi or the Illinois Rivers. All traffic had to cross those two rivers on ferry boats.

Most freight was delivered by river steamboats which plied between St. Louis and St. Paul. There was usually one steamer a day each way. One of the names of the river steamers which I remember because we traveled on it between Golden Eagle Landing and St. Louis several times, was the "Golden Eagle."

St. Matthews congregation was a congregation of so-called "Schleswig-Holseiners." These people were a hard-headed North German race, which often was at war in olden times with the other German Provinces. They were a very independent and reliable people. During World War I, these people in Calhoun County, to show their patriotism for America, their new home, discarded German preaching and demanded of their pastor to preach in English. But he was an aged man who could barely speak enough English to carry on his business at banks and stores, and found himself unqualified for the change-over. Also, though a Lutheran pastor, he was morally not an example for he often drank to excess. Therefore, some members of the congregation had charged him with drunkenness in a regularly called quarterly meeting which he refused to attend. Because he did not attend that meeting, the members that were present dismissed him from office. Three lawsuits followed his dismissal. But of these I will say more in a later chapter.

I accepted that call to St. Matthews Church at Brussels on the advice of Uncle Adam Klein. It was a good thing for the congregation, that neither he nor I knew in what mess this congregation really was. Had we known, I would never have gone there. The salary offered was nine hundred dollars a year and free house, but I was told that I would not need horse and buggy, that the members who needed my services would come after me.

However, before speaking of our move to Brussels, I want to say somewhat more about our experiences in Collinsville. We had some fine neighbors. Our home on Lincoln Street, north of the business section of the town. Across the street from us the town photographer had his home. He and his wife were of Italian descent. His name was Mr. Rissi. They were strict Roman Catholics and we were Lutherans, but that did not in the least affect their neighborliness.

Mrs. Rissi visited mother regularly before we left Collinsville, and we had a family portrait made by Mr. Rissi, which turned out fine. My brother Lorenz was confirmed by Uncle Adam on Palm Sunday of 1919. He had attended the congregation's school and uncle's confirmation classes over a year. My mother came from El Paso to visit us and Uncle Adam and his family for the occasion, and she took Lorenz home with her, when she returned to El Paso. We missed him very much. He had been as an older brother to our children and we all loved him.

After he left our home, mother's sister, Miss Helen Naguschewski, came and lived with us for many months. She was employed as a weigher of packaged meat at Swift and Company's packing plant in East St. Louis. She had formerly been employed as a war worker of the Canadian Government at Sarnia, in Ontario, across from the City of Detroit, Michigan. When the war came to a close, she too was out of a job.

While at Collinsville, I was summoned by the President of the Western District of the Lutheran Church, Missouri Synod, to appear at a hearing that was held by the President's office at Pleasant Grove, Missouri. I had when I resigned from the ministry at that place entered a complaint against my former congregation. This complaint had to be settled one way or another, before that congregation could again call a pastor of the Missouri Synod. They were served by Pastor Pflanz from Clarks Fork after I had abandoned them.

President Bernthal of the Western District delegated the Reverend Brust, First Vice-President, to represent him in the case. Pastor Brust was the college pastor of St. Paul's Lutheran Church at Concordia, Missouri. It was on the Sunday after Easter, in 1919 that I was to appear for the hearing at Pleasant Grove. Also, I was told to choose a pastor out of the Jefferson City Conference to represent me at this hearing. I chose Pastor William Richter of Jefferson City, Missouri. We arrived at Wooldridge at about 2:00 p. m. that Sunday and were quickly brought to the meeting at the church by Mr. Theodore Diehl, an Elder of the congregation, and a good friend of mine.

Pastor John Mueller of Bunceton, Missouri, my former Circuit Counselor, was Secretary of that investigation meeting. Dr. Brunst was Chairman. When the meeting had been opened, my enemies in the congregation immediately protested the presence of Pastor Richter. They wanted to know what business he had in that meeting. Dr. Brunst told them that he was there at the President of the District's invitation to be my counselor in the trial.

Next, I was told to present my charges against the congregation. I related thereupon what had preceded my resignation. How, because of inflationary cost of living I had pleaded with my former congregation to increase my salary, and that my plea had been twice seconded by my Circuit counselor, but without avail. That my request had been tabled from one quarterly meeting to the other, for two long years, and when at last in the annual meeting of 1918 I had demanded action in the matter, a resolution had been passed with a bare majority of all the members present stating, "Wir wollen unserm Pastor keine Gehaltszulage gewaehren"; in English, "We don't want to grant our pastor an increase in salary."

I pointed out also that the Secretary of the congregation had protested that resolution, saying to the congregation, "People, you surely don't want such a resolution spread on your church records." But that he was answered by the member who had made the motion, "If we say we can't give our pastor an increase in salary, that would not be true. But we don't want to grant him an increase, that is true, and that is why I offered the resolution as it reads." All of my charges against the congregation were corroborated by Pastor Mueller, the Circuit Counselor; by Mr. Eichhorst, the congregation's Secretary; and by the two year quarterly meeting minutes of the congregation.

After Dr. Brust had heard all evidence pro and con, he said to the congregation, "Brethren, you have willfully and maliciously

refused your former pastor's plea for an increase of only a hundred dollars in his salary. You admit in your congregational minutes that you could have readily given him the requested increase. He should have asked you for far more and you should have, for love of God's word, which he has preached to you faithfully for the past five years, and in which he also faithfully taught your children five days a week, for nine months of the year, gladly and immediately granted his very modest request. By your refusal to consider the matter for two long years, you have driven your pastor into bankruptcy and forced him to resign his office among you. You have actually driven your pastor, who was very patient with you, from his holy office. Before you will get your District's consent to call and to install another pastor here, you will have to admit and confess your wrongdoing and you will have to reimburse him and his counselor for their traveling expenses. In all fairness, you ought also to pay the costs of his moving to Collinsville. I will now give you time to hold a short meeting of your own in which I will await resolutions to this effect."

Dr. Brust thereupon relinquished the chair to the Chairman of the congregation, and he conducted an emergency congregational meeting, in which all the requests of Dr. Brust were taken care of by resolutions passed unanimously by the congregation. The treasurer of the congregation then paid Pastor Richter and myself our traveling expenses. Also he asked me what it had cost me to move my family and household articles to Collinsville, but I told him to forget that part of it.

Pastor Brust demanded that all the members show the sincerity of their apology by shaking my hands before the meeting was dismissed. This was a rather painful gesture, but in a long string former foes and friends marched by and shook me by the hand, and some of my former foes earnestly assured me that they were sorry for what they had done. It was with much joy and satisfaction that on the next day I returned to Collinsville.

Let me say in closing the chapter on my stay in Pleasant Grove that the congregation had to call thirteen times before they found a successor to my ministry among them. The congregation has no resident pastor at the present time. Also, the Pleasant Grove congregation had to raise the pastor's pay to nine hundred dollars per annum before they at last procured another man. He stayed only for a little over two years. After he left the congregation again was vacant for a long time.

After it had raised the salary to thirteen hundred dollars a year, they secured a fine man who served the congregation for a

number of years. Under his pastorate, the very man who headed the opposition to me died, and before his death confessed that he had done me a great wrong, and he asked his pastor to report this fact to me after his death.

Another significant fact was this, that in the fall of 1918 eighteen members of the Pleasant Grove congregation died of the Spanish influenza epidemic, and among them most of my bitterest enemies. One of my members said to me many years later: I can merely say that it was a startling fact that so many of the members died. Had I been there at the time, perhaps I would have died also. For although I did get the influenza at Collinsville late that fall also, at least I had a fine doctor to take care of me while in Pleasant Grove; the only good doctor had been drafted into the United States Medical Corps, and the one doctor left at Jamestown was too old and over-worked to be able to do much for those that had been stricken.

XI

OUR YEARS AT BRUSSELS, ILLINOIS

Brussels, Illinois is located on a narrow, high bluff peninsula, between the Illinois and the Mississippi Rivers in Calhoun County. Brussels is near the southern most tip of that peninsula. The County Seat was at Hardin, about twenty miles to the north, then a little inland town without bridge or railroad connections of any kind. All the towns of Calhoun County were very small. The soil of the county is fertile Loess Clay, which in places was forty feet deep, especially adapted for fruit raising.

The main crop of the county consisted of apples. The county produced upward of five million bushels a year, and the Calhoun apples were noted for size, flavor and color. Some of the orchards covered as much as three hundred acres. The River bottoms produced the finest of corn crops and pasture. Cattle raising, too, was carried on as a sideline by most of the farmers.

All products that came into the county, or that were shipped out, entered and left either by river steamer or else by truck and ferry. When we first came to the county, most of the ferries were very small, just large enough to hold one car or truck. Some years later a large ferry was installed at the Golden Eagle Landing, which

ferried as many as nine cars, or six trucks, across the River at one time.

The ferries across the Mississippi landed on the Missouri shore on a highway which led to St. Charles, Missouri. The one ferry across the Illinois River on the southern tip of the county landed on the East bank of the River a few miles north of Grafton, Illinois. The ferry toll was very reasonable, just one dollar per car, and that included all the passengers in it. A loaded truck was taken across for three dollars a trip.

When we arrived at Brussels, we found, to our surprise, that the Lutheran parsonage was still occupied by the former pastor of the congregation. The congregation had sued twice to dislocate him but without avail. He won both lawsuits. A third suit, an appeal to the District Court, was pending and was to be heard sometime in October. In the meantime, the congregation had rented a small three-room house in Brussels into which the most necessary furniture of ours was moved. The rest of our things were left unpacked in the barns and granaries of our members. We and our furniture had come up the River from East St. Louis by the River Steamer named Alabama.

A former classmate of mine, Pastor W. P. Schultz, had been the interim preacher of the reorganized congregation. He had instructed and confirmed a class of fifty-three adults just before my arrival at Brussels. Some of these had received but three lectures of instruction at the time of their confirmation. So incomplete was the religious instruction that one of the class told me that she did not know why she was confirmed until she had heard my examination and confirmation of my first class on the second Palm Sunday of my stay in Brussels.

I soon learned that many of the people in the congregation that had called me were lodge members and liberals. Consequently, I did not have a Communion Service until I had preached a whole year's series of doctrinal sermons on the Small Catechism of Dr. Martin Luther. This fact did not bother the liberals in the least, until I announced the first Communion Service on the Reformation Sunday of 1920 and stated that this service would only be for those in the congregation who were not members of an anti-Christian lodge; or else had promised to quit the lodge after I had convinced them that they could not hold membership in both: the Lutheran Church and the Anti-Christian Lodge. I shall have more to say about this in a later paragraph.

When the October term of Court came along, I was asked by my congregation to represent the congregation in that trial. St. Matthews congregation had appealed from the County Court's ruling that Pastor Wagner had been dismissed illegally by the congregation. At the trial before the District Court, after the congregation's appeal had been presented, the defense alleged that the congregational meeting which had discharged Pastor Wagner had consisted of riff-raff who were not members in good standing with the congregation. Some of them had formerly belonged but had not communed, nor paid the salary in years. Many others had joined the congregation on the very day on which Pastor Wagner was dismissed. And upon closer examination, I found that all this was true.

In the group which had dismissed their pastor for drunkenness, there were but three individuals who were in good standing with the congregation. The rest were either not in good standing or else they had joined the congregation for the purpose of helping to depose the old pastor. However, the constitution of the congregation contained this proviso, that the quorum of a regularly called meeting qualified to do the business of the congregation were those members who attended that regularly called meeting. It was further stated in the by-laws to the constitution that a "regularly called meeting" was one which had been announced twice from the pulpit in a regular service held in the church, and also this proviso, that "members who did not attend such a regularly called meeting thereby forfeited the right to protest the resolutions passed in the meeting by those members who had attended the meeting and had passed the resolution by a majority vote."

It was this provision in the constitution of the congregation which saved the day for us. After an Evangelical Reformed Pastor of Hardin, Illinois, had at the Court's order translated the constitution of the congregation from the German to the English language and the judge had read the paragraph on which we based our appeal, he ordered the jury to find for the appellant, which was St. Matthews congregation. This court order ended all litigation. Pastor Wagner was given time by the court to vacate the congregation's parsonage by March 1, 1920.

It was on a technicality that we won the case. It was also true that that meeting was a conspiracy against Pastor Wagner. The very same members who dismissed him in that meeting had born with the pastor's weakness for a number of years without protest; for he had been drinking for years and was often seen drunk and had

not been brotherly admonished as the Bible demands. But because these three members wanted English preaching, and Pastor Wagner was unable to give them that, therefore he had been ousted. And the reason why these rebellious members wanted English preaching was not that they could not understand German. They spoke nothing but low German in their homes, but they did not want to be ridiculed by the "German Baitors," who maligned them for not being patriotic Americans.

I soon learned that the better members of the congregation were in fact those people who had remained faithful to their pastor. One of these, a Mr. Fred Kuehnert and his mother and family, lived just across the fence from the congregation's parsonage. What would he do now, that his pastor had been deposed and ejected from the parsonage? What would the other 26 members in good standing do?

I called on them, family after family, and invited them to come to our services. My own people tried to forbid me to preach German in the church. I told them, "If you insist on that, I will do what you folks did. I'll go across the street and preach German to them in the public schoolhouse, where you held the meeting in which you deposed your former pastor." They did not want that to happen, for then they would have been the laughing stock of the community. Therefore, because they knew that I would keep my threat, they gave me permission to preach to the other faction, German, in the afternoon.

This I did for about two years, when these people declared that they would rather come to the English morning services except that I should conduct six Communion Services in German for those that preferred to receive it in the German language. Not all of the opposition group returned. Some of them never came back during my time. Others had their children baptized by me. But in due time all the worth-while people were together again in one group. Harmony, however, did not return until the lodge issue was settled. That settlement came about on the Sunday after Eastern in the year 1921. But I shall relate that story in a later chapter.

We had to spend a total of about six months in that three-room house in Brussels, which the congregation had rented for us. It had no conveniences in it at all. As a result of our crowded living space, we all suffered bad colds in the winter months of 1919 and 1920. Ruth, not even two years old, developed an abcess under one of her arms, which had to be lanced by a doctor. At last, the first of March came around and we were able to move into the vacated

Bahr Family

parsonage, located just behind the beautiful brick church of St. Matthews congregation.

To the east and north, the parsonage was surrounded by the congregational cemetery. The church and brick school of the congregation were to the south of the parsonage. To the west were the home of Mr. and Mrs. Fred Kuehnert, our buggy shed, barn, and chicken house.

We found that the parsonage had been built in 1860 and was in very poor repair. The kitchen and dining room had been added to the original four room building at a much later time. The floor of this newer addition was at least four inches lower than that of the older part of the house. The older part of the house had consisted of a study, a living room from which there was a stairway up into the attic. The attic was divided into two bedrooms. In front, facing the back of the church and school was an eight foot porch, open to sun and wind, recessed under the eaves of the house. The southeast corner post under the eaves had become loose and blew off at every storm we had.

There were no closets and no conveniences of any kind in that old parsonage. The cellar was just a dark hole under the living room, and a stairway from the front porch led into this hole. Never before had we lived in such a delapidated home. However, the letter which had accompanied my call from the congregation promised a new parsonage within a short period of time. However, that short period of time lasted until the spring of 1923.

It was after the lodge issue had been settled before the contract for a new parsonage was given to some local contractors. The new parsonage faced east instead of south. The floor space of the new building was 36 x 48. It was a Queen Ann style, nine room home, modern in all its arrangements. However, there was no well water available. We had a large underground cistern between church and parsonage. But there was no gas and electricity available at the time, and therefore we had a bathroom without the fixtures and an electrically wired home without electricity. All these conveniences were installed many years after we had left Brussels for Iowa.

Two of our children were born at Brussels in that old parsonage of St. Matthews Church. The first to be born there was our son, Lloyd Warren. He first saw the light of day on August 21,

Bahr Family

1920. The second child born to us in that old parsonage at Brussels was our forth daughter, Eunice Martha Jeanne. She was born on August 27, 1922. One of these two children, I forgot which one, was born on a Sunday which happened to be the Mission Festival of the congregation.

The preachers for the Mission Festival were a Pastor Jahn of Edwardsville, and the other a Pastor Rothe from Franit City, Illinois. They had come up from St. Louis on the Burlington Railroad to Peruque, Missouri. There they had been met by a ferryman, who ferried them three miles across the Mississippi River to a landing where I met them.

While they were on the River, a terrible thunderstorm had come up. The ferryman had been forced to land with them on a small, willow-covered island in the River, until the wind calmed down some. They were soaked when they arrived at the landing. Both had worn white linen suits and they looked like something the cat had dragged in. I furnished them with dry shirts and overalls when I got them home, while mother washed and ironed their white linen suits for the next day.

Did those city preachers ever look funny in their make shift clothes. Pastor Rothe, especially, for he was not only short, about five feet four, but also as thin as a smoked herring. He looked lost in my size 17 shirt and size 46 x 30 overalls. Pastor Jahn, on the other hand, was a six-footer but also very thin. His legs stuck out bare four inches above the shoe tops and since I wore a number two sleeve length shirt and he a number four, my shirt sleeves came down only a little below his elbows. They both looked like hay seeds in my clothes, and they almost died laughing at each other. Mother, in the meantime, was kept busy in cleaning and pressing their clothes. It was late before she ever got to bed.

It was early the next morning when the stork began knocking at the door. When at last the two guest preachers were up and had their breakfast, mother asked me to call the doctor and to get the men out of the house. I took them over to the church and showed them the school. In the meantime, the doctor came and went and (mother just told me) that it was little Eunice that had just been born. When I brought the two pastors back into my study, mother-in-law said to them, "Come and see the new baby." Our guests were confounded when they saw the newcommmer, of whose coming they had no inkling at the time they had arrived in our home.

Pastor Schreck and his wife and mother-in-law from Batchtown, ten miles north of Brussels, arrived at about this time, and his mother-in-law, Dean Fritz's wife from St. Louis, shooed us all out of the parsonage so that mother could get her rest after her double ordeal of cleaning two complete outfits of pastors' apparel and giving birth to a new daughter, all in less than twenty hours of time. All this happened while we were still living in the old parsonage.

We had not been in Brussels long when I learned that the Evil Foe had sown his tares among the wheat in St. Matthews field. Even my salary was tainted with evil. From the recorded resolutions of the congregation, I learned that my call was in fact only a temporary call, although this fact was not indicated in the call itself. For a resolution of the congregation stated that "the first business to be conducted in every annual meeting of the congregation which was to be held always on January the second, was the re-election of the pastor." Another resolution declared that to be a member of the congregation in good standing, he needed to pay at least one dollar a year in dues.

When I asked a white haired old member of the congregation, "where then does the pastor's salary come from?" he answered with a wink of his eye, "The Catholics pay most of that." "How do you mean this?" I asked him. He replied, "Well, our congregation owns a portable dance hall, which we set up in a wooded pasture every summer in August for a two day and night picnic. The Catholic Church has a two day's Saint's festival at the time, and most of the members come to our picnic and spend their money dancing on our dance floor. That usually brings in enough to pay our pastor's salary."

I felt at first that the aged member was making fun of me, but it was the truth. After I had learned all this, I came to the conclusion that there were but two courses of procedure left open to me: one of them to reform the congregation; the other to resign my ministry a second time. I chose to fight for reform.

When, therefore, the annual meeting of the congregation was held and the chairman of the meeting announced that now he awaited a motion on the question of whether the congregation wanted the pastor to continue with the congregation for another year, I asked for the floor and in a matter of fact voice told them that in the practice of the Lutheran Church of the Missouri Synod, the call to a congregation was considered permanent except, when the pastor's call stated in so many words that his call was temporary. I also called their

attention to the constitution of St. Matthews Church, which safeguarded the congregation in a separate article by saying, "The pastor of this congregation may be dismissed at any time if he becomes guilty (a) of teaching false doctrine contrary to the clear testimony of the Scriptures, (b) when the pastor neglects his official duties to which the congregation has bound him at the time of his installation, and (c) when the pastor gives offense by an unchristian life and conduct, and does not amend his life after due admonition."

Since the trial of Pastor Wagner in Hardin, the members of the congregation had a high respect for their constitution, and so after I had made my statement and had read the paragraph of their constitution which gave but three good reasons for discharging their pastor, a motion was offered, seconded, and passed to cancel the provision of re-electing their pastor in every annual meeting of the congregation. That was my first victory for order and decency in St. Matthews congregation. It had been quickly won.

My next fight was not won as quickly. For in this first meeting of 1920 I also told the congregation that I would not accept the blood money (I called it just that) which they were exacting from the Roman Catholic Church members, garnered in on the dance floor owned and operated by St. Matthews Lutheran Church, as my salary from St. Matthews. This announcement raised a storm of protest.

The protestants were especially loud in lodging their protest, because among Schleswig Holsteiners, dancing and drinking were not considered sinful, and no preacher could convince them otherwise because they said that in the Old Country the pastor of the town or village had not only sanctioned dancing, but had actually danced the first set himself.

Another member declared that Pastor Wagner had never preached against dancing, and that he also had opened every year's dance by dancing the first set himself. To all this I replied that in the Old Country their pastor had also preached exclusively in the German language, even as their former pastor had done here among them, and since they did not want dancing to be called sinful, they should properly have kept their old pastor who had done just as their pastors in Schleswig-Holstein had done.

This reply of mine caused many of my members to smile. For Schleswig-Holsteiners have a sense of humor. And because I stuck to my guns, they respected me, even though they did not agree

with me completely. And quite a bit of discussion and argument followed, after which the congregation agreed to sell the portable dance floor and henceforth to pay their pastor's salary out of their own pockets.

My next conflict came up because of the fact that eighteen of the voting members of the congregation were either Masons, Odd Fellows, or Woodmen of the World. I have already stated before this that for a whole year I did not conduct a Communion Service in the congregation, and also that I preached on the chief six parts of Dr. Martin Luther's Catechism, as they were the chief doctrines of the Bible taken by Dr. Luther from the Bible.

In my sermon on the first of the Holy Commandments, I stressed the Doctrine of the Triune God as He has revealed Himself in the Scriptures: One God, but three separate persons, namely, God the Father, who has created the world in six ordinary days lasting from morning to evening, and who still preserves His Creation to this day; the second person of the God-head is God the Son, begotten from His Father from eternity, and born true man of the Virgin Mary in the fullness of time, to be the Saviour and Redeemer of a sin-lost world; the third person in the Holy Trinity, is God the Holy Ghost, who is sent or proceeds from both, the Father and the Son, in the Gospel and in the Sacraments of our Lord Jesus Christ to call, gather, sanctify and keep in the faith those who are to be saved.

In my application to my sermon on the first of the Holy Ten Commandments of God, I called attention to the fact that this true God of the Bible who says, "Thou shalt have no other gods before me," is not the God of the Masonic, the Odd Fellow, the Woodmen of the World, nor of any other lodge, which teaches and practices religion. In my sermons on the Second Article of the Apostles Creed I pointed out that the entire Bible teaches that sinful man is saved by God's Grace alone, for Christ's sake alone, and through faith alone. Even as St. Paul declares in Ephesians 2:8-10, "By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is a gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God has before ordained that we should walk in them." In my application again I stressed the fact that all lodge religion makes man his own saviour and declares that the brother or sister which has passed away is now in the heavenly lodge, because they were good parents, good citizens, good neighbors, etc.

In short, that all lodges maintain that man is saved because of his Good Works, whereas the Bible teaches that sinners are saved

by grace, for Christ's sake, through faith, as Jesus Himself declares in John 3:16: "For God so loved the world, that He gave His Only Begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

In my sermon on the Sacrament of Holy Communion, I called my hearers' attention to the words of Luther on the question, "What is the Sacrament of the Altar?" Luther's answer in his Small Catechism reads: "It is the true body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, under the bread and wine, for US CHRISTIANS TO EAT AND TO DRINK, instituted by Christ Himself."

In my application, I called attention to the fact that Christians believe all that the Bible says about the true God, about God's grace and the blood atonement of our Lord Jesus Christ on the Cross for the sins of the world: also that Christians believe, "that there is no difference but that all men have sinned and come short of the glory of God, being justified by His grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. Whom God set forth to be a propitiation through faith in His blood, to declare His righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; to declare, I say at this time His righteousness, that He might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus." Romans 3:23-26.

And finally I said to them that only those who had been taught the Christian Doctrines as set forth in the Bible, and accepted them in faith could attend Holy Communion, even as St. Paul declares in I Corinthians 11:28-29: "Let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread and drink of that cup. For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body." No one voiced any objection to my preaching at the time, and the church usually was packed with members and with many others who were not members, but anxious to know what the new preacher was saying, that kept his members in a turmoil.

Indeed a storm was brewing, because of my preaching, but it did not break until the third annual meeting of the congregation, on January 2, 1922. Of this I shall speak at length in my next chapter.

After the third annual meeting had been opened by the chairman, I was asked by the spokesman of the party which opposed me why it was that we did no longer have communion services in the church. I told him that we were now ready to begin doing so

again with the provision that each one desiring to partake of the Holy Sacrament announce to the pastor his intention of doing so. Under the previous pastor, no one had announced. Everyone came as he was moved by his desire to do so. Very few had gone regularly. In fact, most of the members had looked upon Holy Communion as a rite of the church which one observed at the time of his confirmation and once a year after that.

One good woman told me that in the Old Country, one went to the Sacrament on the Easter Sunday after confirmation and not again until just before one's death. So it was not an earnest desire for the Sacrament, which had moved the spokesman of the trouble-makers to ask why we had not celebrated the Lord's Supper in the church, but he asked the question merely to start trouble in the congregation for me.

My answer to his question stilled the storm for the time being. I also informed the congregation that we would now have six communion Sundays a year in both the German and in the English languages. Every first Sunday of the month was to be a Communion Service. Beginning with the first Sunday in January, which was to be an English Communion Sunday, and the first Sunday in February a German Communion Sunday. And thus in rotation for each following month. I also announced that all who wanted to go to Holy Communion on the following Sunday in January could announce themselves immediately after the meeting, or before Church took upon the next Sunday morning.

As a result of this announcement, a large number announced themselves immediately after the meeting had been closed. Surprisingly, only a very few of the trouble-makers announced themselves. I asked every one whether he or any members of his family belonged to a lodge. If the answer was "no," I accepted them forthwith. If the answer, however, was "yes," I asked them whether or not they would let me try to convince them from the Bible that they ought to sever their connection with the lodge. If they answered that they were ready to be convinced by me, I accepted them for Holy Communion.

In the end, I had to deny the Sacrament to a few because they told me they would under no circumstances whatsoever quit the lodge, nor let me try to convince them from God's word that they ought to do so. These, to whom I denied the Sacrament, walked out in anger.

In the meantime, I had provided myself with copies of the Masonic, Odd Fellow and Woodmen of America Rituals from the Christian Cynosure Company of Chicago. With these rituals in my hand, I proved from the Bible that the God of the lodge was in no way identical with the Triune God of the Bible; secondly, that the way to Salvation for a sinner was according to the lodge teaching not by God's Grace alone, for Christ's sake alone, through faith alone, but that all lodges without exception made man his own Saviour, by his being a good husband, or wife; a good father or mother; a good neighbor, a good citizen; and above all, a good lodge maker.

I had no trouble at all in convincing those who were really Bible believing Christians. Of the eighteen lodge members, I convinced six that they could not be both: true Christians and at the same time good lodge members. The other twelve showed quickly that they did not care what the Bible taught, but they would not ever quit the lodge in spite of anything and everything that I could tell them otherwise. Yes, trouble was brewing, and it threatened to disrupt St. Matthews congregation.

The storm broke at the next quarterly meeting on the afternoon of the First Sunday in April of 1922. Every Tom, Dick and Harry of the congregation was present, even some who were not voting members of the congregation. After the chairman had called the meeting to order, the self-appointed spokesman of the enemies of God's Word called upon the chairman of the congregation to call for a motion which would decide whether the congregation wanted to keep Pastor Bahr or the lodge members of the congregation.

I immediately protested that such a motion was altogether out of order, that before the congregation could legally dismiss their pastor, they would according to their own constitution have to charge their pastor with one of three things: first, with false teaching or preaching; secondly, with neglect of official duties; thirdly, with conduct unbecoming to a minister of the Gospel. However, the opposition party demanded of the chairman that he either call the motion or else resign as chairman of the congregation. They accused me of denying them their rights as voting members of the congregation; the right to partake of Holy Communion.

When I saw that the chairman was in a quandry, what to do in the situation, I again asked for the floor and made the motion that this meeting be continued two weeks later in order to have a representative of my Synod there to hear the charges against me,

as well as to advise both the congregation and myself what to do to settle the matter. To my surprise, the motion was seconded and passed with a great majority.

I wrote to President Kleinhans immediately and asked him to send someone to represent the District, and someone capable of advising both the congregation and myself what to do in the matter. I received an answer promising me help within the same week, and to my surprise it was my own Uncle Adam Klein, the First Vice-President of the Southern Illinois District, who was sent by President Kleinhans of the District to be an advisory witness of the called meeting.

I would have rather had someone else at the meeting than my uncle. I feared that the opposition party in the congregation would charge uncle with being biased in his judgment, for the reason of being related to me, the pastor of the congregation. However, my fears were altogether unnecessary.

The church was crowded that afternoon. Not only all of the members were present, but also a large number of visitors. When the chairman had called the meeting to order, I introduced my uncle to them and told them that he was here to hear both sides of the controversy, and to report back to the District President what action had been taken by the congregation in this meeting.

The chairman of the congregation next asked me how to proceed. I told him to ask the congregation for the charges which they had preferred against me. Immediately following my advice, the opposition party began to accuse me of being a despot. They said that I had insulted them because of their lodge connections and had denied them their rights as members of the congregation by refusing to commune them.

Uncle Adam expressed his surprise after this charge had been made against me, that there were so many lodge members in the congregation and called attention to the fact that lodge membership was not tolerated in the Lutheran Church of the Missouri Synod, simply because the religion of the lodge was not the religion of the Bible. This explanation on the part of my uncle acted as oil poured upon the fire.

The opposition flamed into open rebellion, not only against me, but also against the Lutheran Church of the Missouri Synod. The