

"The Vanishing Shakers," January 18, 1917

THE VANISHING SHAKERS.

From Kentucky comes the story of three aged survivors of a once large colony of Shakers making arrangements to have their lands valued at more than \$1,000,000 revert to the State.

Thus is passing one more of the picturesque little Shaker communities that dotted the East and Middle West after the coming of Mother Ann Lee. "the elect lady" from England in 1774.

There are only a few of them left.

Probably the total number of Shakers in the country is far below the 1,000 that they mustered when the last enumeration was taken half a dozen years ago.

Forty years ago they numbered 4,000. Most of the colonies in passing have left riches in land and buildings, for the Shakers have been thrifty and industrious.

History will probably place their religion on the long list of freak isms and ologies that have risen and fallen, but there has been much in the simplicity and purity of the Shaker life to make the thoughtful ponder.

Shakerism has been defined as spiritualism grafted to Quaker theology, with celibacy and communism thrown in; but that hardly does it justice.

The quaint drab life of the celibate communities has won few converts in this generation and the adoption of children has not kept pace with the passing of the aged.

The last Shaker community will hardly linger more than a few years longer.

Boston Herald.