

What Ever Happened to... Watson Signor

Watson Bertice Signor was born in October 1877 in Hamden, Delaware County NY, the oldest of seven children of George Yates Signor (1853-1938) and Ida Antoinette (Rowe) Signor (1856-1937). He grew up on the family farm, with many Signor relatives in the area. The wife of his grandfather's brother kept a diary in which she mentions Watson and a Miss Jessie Smith as (separate) visitors to her house. That same diary notes: "Married, at Walton, Sept. 8th 1898 by Rev. Robert Knapp,¹ Watson B. Signor of Telford Hollow and Miss Jessie A. Smith² of Walton. Mr. and Mrs. Signor will reside at Bainbridge." In November 1898 their union was blessed with a son Duane.³

Signor first appears in the journal in 1899 as a local preacher living in Bainbridge, Chenango County NY. While he was not the appointed pastor, local newspapers credit him with assisting at funerals serving in other ways. In 1900 he was appointed to supply the Arlington⁴ charge. He continued in that capacity until being admitted on trial in 1904 and ordained a deacon in 1906. His service record is as follows.

1900-03	Arlington
1903-07	Thornhurst
1907-11	Bethany
1911-12	Orson
1912	expelled [1912, 80]

When the appointments were read at the end of the annual conference in April 1911, Signor was assigned to the Orson charge. All seemed to be going well when on July 10 signor and his wife and son came to Scranton to attend an outing of the preachers and their families on the next day. Leaving his family with friends, he apparently went into the central part of the city and disappeared.

The story instantly captured the public attention. In an age when it was easier for people to simply walk away from an undesirable situation and start over someplace else, strange disappearances were not unheard of – but in this case there had been no indication of personal or other problems that would have precipitated

¹ Robert Knapp (1856-1937) was serving the Walton charge of the New York Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church. The Delaware County communities of Walton, Telford Hollow, Hamden and Downsville (mentioned later) all fall within a circle with a radius of about 5 miles.

² One source gives this name as "Jessie Wealthy Smith" – but the middle "A." appears to be correct,

³ Their only child – some material refers to him as Duane Smith Signor, but his proper name appears to have been Duane Darwin Signor. He died in 1977 and is buried in California.

⁴ Arlington is in Wayne County, 6 miles east of Hamlin. The church here was closed in 1958 and the property sold to the cemetery association. Among the appointments on this charge was the present Lakeville UMC.

such a voluntary action, and there was genuine concern. An extended front page story,⁵ reproduced in part as follows, sounded the alarm.

SEARCH IS ON FOR MINISTER WHO CAME HERE

Rev. Watson B. Signor, pastor of Methodist Episcopal Church in Orson, Wayne County, Disappears While in This City to Attend Picnic of Preachers at Nay Aug

HEAD OF M. E. DISTRICT PUTS POLICE ON TRAIL

All Ministers of Conference Asked to Assist

Missing Preacher Had Little Money on Person When He Left
Family Home Life and Pastoral Relations Happy

The missing clergyman, Rev. Watson B. Signor is thirty-three years of age, is five feet four inches in height, weighs 140 pounds, has dark hair, a round smooth face, and may be identified by a slight convulsive nervous twitching of the head. When last seen he wore a dark sack suit and a black derby hat. He has been strangely missing since 6:30 o'clock Monday afternoon, having disappeared while in this city on his way to visit Rev. L.C. Murdock, superintendent of the Scranton district of the Wyoming Conference. The clergyman's friends feel that his mind has become affected by the heat and that he has wandered away, or that something more serious has happened to him.

In an effort to locate Mr. Signor, Dr. Murdock prepared last night to communicate today with all the district Superintendents in every conference of the Methodist Episcopal church in the East, and has requested the *Tribune-Republican* to aid in the search.

Rev. Mr. Signor, accompanied by his wife and their son, Duane, left their home in Orson at 3 o'clock Monday afternoon, intending to participate in the picnic of Methodist ministers and their wives in Nay Aug park yesterday afternoon. The Signors were to visit Mr. and Mrs. John E. Wolff, of 2017 North Main Avenue in the North Scranton section. Mr. Signor spent Monday morning picking raspberries in the garden of the parsonage at Orson, so that he could bring some of the berries to Mr. and Mrs. Wolff. After dinner Mr. Signor, his wife and their son, walked three-quarters of a mile to the New York, Ontario and Western station in Orson, where they boarded a train for this city. After taking seats in the train, Mr. Signor complained of the heat, saying that the walk and the morning exercise had been too much for him. Several times during the journey from Orson to Scranton, Mr. Signor went to the platform of the car upon which he was riding, returning to his seat each time refreshed.

When the train arrived at the Green Ridge station of the railroad Mr. Signor and family left the train and the minister carried the suit case to Providence Square. As he reached there, a Scranton Railway company car, city bound, swung into sight. "You and Duane walk up to Wolff's," said Mr. Signor. "I will take this package to the Lackawanna Laundry and then visit Dr. Murdock. Don't keep supper waiting up at Wolff's house. I may be late. Good-bye dear." Mr. Signor boarded the car, and as he entered from the platform he waved his hand to his wife. That was the last Mrs. Signor saw of her husband.

At 8 o'clock Monday evening, she became alarmed at her husband's failure to appear, as he was a man who never stayed from home for an evening. Mrs. Signor's first step was to call by phone the residence of Dr. Murdock, at 1403 Linden Street. Mrs. Murdock, wife of the district superintendent, answered the telephone and told Mrs. Signor that there had been no one to see Dr. Murdock, who was attending a quarterly conference at the Throop church. Dr. Murdock returned from Throop at 9:15 o'clock and

⁵ Scranton *Republican*, July 12, 1911, page 1.

immediately got in communication with Mrs. Signor. Dr. Murdock then reported the disappearance to Sergeant of Police, George Jones. A quiet search was made yesterday through the hospitals of this section under the direction of the police, but no clue was found to the whereabouts of Mr. Signor. It was found, however, that sometime between 3:30 o'clock and 6 o'clock Monday evening Mr. Signor had left a package at the Lackawanna Laundry, and that he had personally registered his package there at that time.

Mrs. Signor was seen at the Wolff residence last night. "I do not know what to make of it," she said. "Watson could not have gone very far, for he didn't have any money to speak of. We had \$30 with us and when we got on the train he gave me most of it, saying that if he needed any more, he would ask for it."

District Superintendent Murdock had only the highest praise for Mr. Signor. "The case is mysterious," said Dr. Murdock. "I have been searching all day, without the faintest clue beyond the appearance of Mr. Signor at the laundry. Mr. Signor was an earnest, spiritual young man, a good preacher with a good grasp of his work. His family life was marked by affection and every time that I have visited Orson I have found Mr. Signor and his good wife and son in perfect happiness."

Two days later the following story appeared on the front page of a nearby New York newspaper.⁶

WIDE HUNT FOR MINISTER

Fifty Pastors Ask Methodists to Locate Rev. W. B. Signor.

Wilkesbarre, Pa., July 13 — Rev. Watson B. Signor, pastor of the Methodist Episcopal church at Orson, Wayne county, who disappeared in Scranton, is still missing. All the ministers of the Wyoming conference are on the lookout for information concerning their missing confederate, and through these ministers, numbering more than fifty, the members of all the Methodist congregations will be enlisted in the search.

The young minister's family life and pastoral relations were unusually happy. In the small village of Orson and the surrounding country, Rev. Mr. Signor was well liked. The news of his sudden and mysterious disappearance created surprise.

Seven days later, the Honesdale *Citizen*⁷ carried the following story.

An Ithaca dispatch says: Chas. Seabring, who mysteriously disappeared from home a week ago, has been located at Kiowa, Kan. He went away from home during the hot spell and he wired home that his mind had been a blank since he left. His wife and aunt left Saturday to bring him back. Perhaps we shall hear from Rev. Watson B. Signor, Orson, the missing Methodist clergyman, who so mysteriously disappeared in Scranton nearly a week ago, in the same manner as from the Ithaca wanderer.

In less than two weeks the concern had spread nation-wide, as illustrated by the following story in the San Francisco *Call*.⁸

POLICE SEARCH CITY FOR MISSING MINISTER

On the request of friends and relatives of the missing man, acting Captain of Detectives Ryan yesterday detailed detectives to search for Rev. Watson B. Signor of

⁶ Ogdensburg *Journal*, July 14, 1911, page 1.

⁷ July 19, 1911, page 5.

⁸ July 21, 1911 [volume 110, number 51].

Orson, Wayne County, Pa., who disappeared from his home in the east two weeks ago. The chief of police of Scranton informed the local authorities that a nationwide search is being made for the minister, who is described as being 33 years old, five feet four inches in height and weighing about 140 pounds.

As the summer wore on, the saga took on some interesting twists, as reported by the *Scranton Republican*. An August 1 article⁹ proclaimed "Mrs. Edward Hackers, the Bethany woman, whose name has been connected with that of the missing minister, is in an Illinois town, according to her sister, Mrs. Owens, of Carbondale. Mrs. Owens declares that her sister will return East this week to clear her name."¹⁰ An article two days later added another layer to the story.¹¹

ATTEMPT MADE TO GET SIGNOR MAIL

Request From Man, on Saturday, in Chicago for Clergyman's Letter.

HASNT INQUIRED SINCE

Application was made at 5 o'clock Saturday afternoon at the general delivery window of the Chicago post office for mail addressed to Rev. Watson B. Signor, the Methodist Episcopal clergyman of Orson, Wayne County, who disappeared in this city Monday, July 10, and who has not been heard from since that time. The person who was looking for the letter addressed to Rev. Mr. Signor has not appeared at the Chicago post office since Saturday. This was the information received late yesterday afternoon by Superintendent of Police Lona B. Day from Nicholas Hunt, captain of detectives of the Chicago police department. Captain Hunt's telegram was "Rev. Watson B. Signor called at 5 o'clock Saturday afternoon for mail before the mail arrived. He has not appeared since. Letter now awaiting him. Will detain if effort is made to secure the letter."

Superintendent Day notified the Chicago police Sunday evening that a letter had been addressed from Chicago to Mrs. Signor, wife of the clergyman, at her home in Orson, asking for \$15, with which to come home. The letter was written in a woman's hand and stated that Rev. Mr. Signor was too ill to write. The answer was to be sent to "General Delivery, Chicago." The postmark of the letter which Mrs. Signor received was Thursday, July 26, and her answer accompanying the money for which a request was made, was sent Saturday afternoon and reached Chicago Monday morning.

Attempt at Flim Flam

"Someone is trying to play on Mrs. Signor's anxiety to fleece her," said Superintendent Day yesterday afternoon. "In the first place, the letter to Mrs. Signor stated that her husband was too ill to write, and then two days later he is well enough to go to the post office to inquire for a letter. If it was Mr. Signor I believe that he would have returned to the post office every morning until he received an answer."

"It is clear that the man who went for the letter has a woman accomplice," continued the superintendent. "They are afraid now that someone is on to their game." Superintendent Day still holds to the belief that when Rev. Mr. Signor does put in an appearance that all aspersions cast against him will be found to be entirely without basis.

⁹ August 1, 1911, page 1.

¹⁰ There appears to be no definitive follow-up in the newspapers to this possibility, and articles as late as the following February are still treating the disappearance as a mystery. So as not to interrupt the flow of this paper four articles that expand on this angle (and hint at the district superintendent's growing doubts about Signor) are given in the appendix.

¹¹ August 3, 1911, page 3.

In fact, "His past life has been such that such a theory as has been advanced is hardly reasonable," said the superintendent.

Missing Man a Poet

Conflicting reports have reached here as to the personality of Rev. Mr. Signor. There are some reports to the effect that Rev. Mr. Signor was a man of culture, fine instincts, high ideals and lofty sentiments. Other reports went so far as to characterize Mr. Signor as a "clod." At the effort to shed light on the mental poise of the minister, *The Tribune-Republican* reproduces one of his poems published Friday May 19 by the *Wayne Independent*, a Honesdale newspaper – A VISION. The following verses were written Thursday afternoon, May 4, by Rev. W. B. Signor on the top of Sugar Loaf mountain, in from the parsonage at Orson. One of the grandest views to be obtained in northeastern Pennsylvania can be had from the summit of this mountain. It was while the writer was on the heights and beholding the wonderful view that the following verses came to him.

I stood upon the mountain top, and viewed the landscape o'er;
 It seemed that I was near to heaven, nearer than e'er before.
 I saw the lakes, I saw the streams, I saw God's land so rare;
 And when I looked to the skies above I knelt in humble prayer.
 And prayed that God would touch the hearts of sinners far and near,
 And bring them to the Savior's fold, the fold He loves so dear.
 It seemed I heard a voice from heaven, a voice so sweet and low,
 Methought it trembled on the air, "My child, I'd have it so.
 But there are hearts whose doors are closed and will not hear the call;
 They do not care that I bore the cross, nor drank the bitter gall.
 Their eyes are blind, they do not see the awfulness of sin;
 Their ears are deaf, they do not hear the knock and let me in."
 I looked again, the scene was changed; the throne seemed to appear.
 The good, the bad were gathered there; I thought I saw the tears
 Flow down the cheeks of Jesus, God's only begotten Son;
 And then I knew full well the Judgment had begun.
 I can't describe the awful scene; the books were open wide.
 Then God came forth and took a seat close to the Savior's side.
 The sinners heard their awful doom, "Depart, I know you not."
 And then He turned to the righteous who had a different lot.
 The voice was clear, the smile so sweet; 'twas the voice of God's own Son.
 "Come, ye blessed of my Father, Well done, dear ones, well done."

The aspersions cast against Rev. Signor referred to in the preceding account were apparently beginning to mount – as were the protests against such unsubstantiated claims and innuendos. One week later, in fact, the *Wayne County Herald* felt compelled to publish the following defense¹² of its negative treatment of the missing reverend.

The *Scranton Tribune* is our authority for the statement that Rev. W.B. Signor used a false name – that he received letters addressed to Rev. T.L. Newell, care of Rev. Watson B. Signor. There is no Rev. T.L. Newell who was friendly to Mr. Signor, and no one by that name ever visited Orson. He visited Forest City prior to his departure when his wife supposed he was in Carbondale attending a meeting.

¹² *Wayne County Herald*, August 11, 1911.

After another week, the existence of those mysterious letters and other information relevant to the investigation became fully public. One Bradford County PA newspaper¹³ reported the new developments as follows.

It is considered a circumstance worthy of consideration by the authorities that all of the letters received by Rev. Mr. Signor for "Rev. T. L. Newell" were postmarked "Carbondale" and that no trace of the letters has been found. The probability is that the letters were destroyed. Another evidence that there was some underground communication between the minister and someone in Carbondale or Forest City was the visit to Forest City by Mr. Signor a month before he disappeared. When an acquaintance met the minister there and asked him what he was doing, Signor replied that he came there to spend a few days with friends. At that time the clergyman's wife believed he was attending a meeting in Carbondale – and as for friends in Forest City he had none, it is said, outside of the clergyman who asked him what he was doing there.

Summer turned to fall, and fall to winter, and still the disappearance of Watson Signor remained a mystery. Then in February 1912, one of the most bizarre stories yet appeared in print.¹⁴

**REV. W. B. SIGNOR, WHO MYSTERIOUSLY
DISAPPEARED LAST JULY, HEARD FROM**

WROTE A LETTER TO HIS FATHER IN DOWNSVILLE, N. Y., IN WHICH HE STATED HE IS WITH A BAND OF ROBBERS WHO SAND-BAGGED HIM IN SCRANTON LAST JULY.
[SPECIAL TO THE CITIZEN.]

DOWNSVILLE, Feb. 27.—Mr. and Mrs. Vincent Signor of this place are in the possession of a letter purported to be written them by their son, Rev. Watson B. Signor, who so mysteriously disappeared from Orson, Wayne county, Pa., where he had a charge, being pastor of the Methodist Episcopal church at that place. This is the first message received from their son since his disappearance last July.

In his letter, it is alleged, that he has been with them since leaving Scranton. He says that after he left his wife and son that he was sand-bagged, a bag placed over his head and that was the last that he realized anything until he awoke in Cincinnati, Ohio. He states that he was then told that he was a captive and would have to do as he was bade. From Cincinnati Rev. Signor writes, it is alleged, that he will go to Milwaukee with his captors, where a hold-up is expected to take place. Mr. Signor claimed that he is held in close confinement when not out with the gang. He claimed that he was writing the letter in a lavatory of a hotel and had a boy waiting to mail it for him. Stated that he was watched very closely and that the highwaymen would give him liberty after he had been with them two years.

Mr. and Mrs. Signor are glad to hear that their son is alive, but are hoping and praying that he might be delivered out of the hands of his enemies.

Rev. Watson B. Signor, at the time of his disappearance in Scranton July 10, 1911, was pastor of the Orson Methodist Episcopal church. He accompanied his family to Scranton that afternoon, leaving them at 5:30 o'clock. Not a word has been heard from Mr. Signor nor the slightest clue obtained of his whereabouts since he registered a package at the Lackawanna Laundry, Scranton, last summer, until the letter claimed to have been received by his father, Vincent Signor, in Downsville, Sullivan county, N. Y., a few days ago.

¹³ Athens Gazette, August 17, 1911, page 2.

¹⁴ Honesdale The Citizen, February 28, 1912, page 1. The article names Watson Signor's father as Vincent Signor, but all other sources give his name as George Yates Signor.

While Signor was missing, for the rest of the conference year, the Orson charge was served by David High, a local preacher from Norristown, Montgomery County PA, in the Philadelphia Conference. In the meantime Mrs. Signor apparently dealt with the situation by trading the empty parsonage for comfort and support in the homes of relatives. In February, for example, the *Wayne County Herald* reported¹⁵ “Mrs. Watson B. Signor and son Duane passed through Orson from Newark, N. J., to Utica, N. Y., via O & W last Friday.”

When the Wyoming Conference reconvened in March 1912, the case resurfaced. On the second day [page 32], Signor’s case was referred to the Committee on Conference Relations. On the fourth day [page 47], “the case of Mrs. Watson B. Signor was made special, and the Board of Stewards was instructed to grant her for this year the equivalent of a first-class claim¹⁶ for widows.” On the morning of the fifth day and final day [page 54], formal charges against Signor were received, and a committee was appointed “to consider the case and report to the Conference.” That afternoon [page 68] the committee “reported the charges sustained and recommended that the accused be dismissed from the membership and ministry of the Methodist Episcopal Church.” Bishop Earl Cranston made it official and “declared the action of the select number to be final and that Watson B. Signor is expelled from the membership and ministry of the Methodist Episcopal Church.”

While the Conference journals give no further details, the secular press comes to the rescue. The *Scranton Truth* for March 25, 1912, page 1, reported that the formal charges against Signor were “leaving his charge” and “deserting his family.” There still being some sympathy for the missing man and the possibility that Signor might actually be dead, it was suggested that “the matter should be put over for a year.” At that point Superintendent Murdock, who appeared to know more than he was telling, replied that Rev. Signor may have died recently, but that he had his grave doubts and reasons for the same. He then added, “This is the lightest charge that can be brought against him, and I make it for the sake of the Church. I know that this will save the Church and work less injury to the man.”

And so those looking for closure as to “What ever happened to Watson B. Signor?” will be disappointed. Census records for 1920 indicate that Jessie Signor and Duane were boarding in Endicott, Broome County NY, with Rev. and Mrs. D. Grant Christman.¹⁷ Duane later married and moved west. Jessie remained in Endicott, died in 1963, and is buried in that city’s Riverside Cemetery. Watson Signor cannot be located in any census or cemetery records, and the explanation for his disappearance and his ultimate fate remain unknown.

¹⁵ February 9, 1912.

¹⁶ For 1912, that payment was \$130. No funds were given Mrs. Signor in subsequent years.

¹⁷ D. Grant Christman (1869-1924) was a preacher and evangelist associated with the Church of the Nazarene. No relationship other than boarder can be established between Jessie Smith Signor and Rev. Christman and his wife May Stevens Christman (1872-1945).

APPENDIX. Four articles related to Mrs. Edward Hackers of Bethany.

MRS. HACKERS FILES PETITION FOR DIVORCE

Bethany Woman Whose Name Has Been Connected With Minister's

Mrs. Edward Hackers of Bethany, whose name has been prominently associated with the disappearance of Rev. Watson B. Signor, the Orson clergyman who dropped from sight in this city July 10, has instituted a suit for divorce from her husband. The papers in the suit have been filed in the office of the Wayne County prothonotary in Honesdale. Mrs. Hackers left the home of her sister, Mrs. Benjamin Owens of Carbondale, a few days before Rev. Mr. Signor disappeared. Mrs. Owens has announced that Mrs. Hackers is to return to Carbondale next week. In the suit for divorce Mrs. Hackers charges her husband with cruel and barbarous treatment. The first papers in the case were filed before the disappearance of Rev. Mr. Signor.

-----Scranton *Republican*, July 31, 1911, page 3

IN DEPARTURE OF REV. SIGNOR

Rev. Murdock Unable to Secure Address of Woman
Who is Supposed to Have Eloped With Clergyman

Rev. L. C. Murdock, D. D., superintendent of the Lackawanna District of the Wyoming Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, in an interview expressed his conviction that Rev. Watson B. Signer, the Orson pastor who disappeared in Scranton July 10, went away of his own accord and that neither aphasia, sunstroke nor insanity were responsible for the clergyman's disappearance. Asked if he thought Rev. Mr. Signor and Mrs. Edward Hackers, one of his former parishioners, who is in the West, had left together, Rev. Dr. Murdock refused to give an opinion other than to say that peculiar circumstances attend the double disappearance. He had talked with Mrs. Hacker's sister, Mrs. Benjamin Owens of Carbondale, Rev. Dr. Murdock said, but had been unable to secure Mrs. Hackers' address. He said he assured Mrs. Owens that he would keep Mrs. Hacker's whereabouts a secret, unless investigation developed that she was with the missing minister, and that if she was not with Rev. Mr. Signor he would see that a statement clearing Mrs. Hackers' name of all suspicion was published.

When it was suggested to Rev. Mr. Murdock that Mrs. Hackers' 17-year-old son had left Carbondale with her and that it was not likely that a woman intending to elope would take a son of that age away from her relatives' home, he said: "Perhaps it has not occurred to you that the boy may not be with his mother. A boy that age is big enough to make his own way and might have been dropped anywhere along the line. He is old enough to get along," replied the minister. "I even went so far as to tell Mrs. Owens that if we did find that Rev. Mr. Signor was with Mrs. Hackers we would drop him from the ministry. She still declined to give me the address that we seek. Understand I am not condemning Mrs. Hackers and hope that Rev. Mr. Signor is not with her. But if we could only find her it would be very easy to learn whether he was or not. Mrs. Owens has so far declined to let me know where she is. But nothing I could use in the way of persuasion seemed to have any effect on her. It is possible that she will yet tell me and then we can make our own investigation. Rev. Mr. Signor's brother, whose home is in New York State, is again in Scranton, but has learned no more about where he is than I have."

-----Wilkes-Barre *Times Leader*, July 27, 1911, page 11

Coming Home to Clear Name
of Implication in Mystery of Missing Minister
STATEMENT BY SISTER

Mrs. Edward Hackers, the Bethany woman, whose name has been connected with the disappearance of Rev. Watson B. Signor, the Orson minister who dropped from sight in this city July 10, is coming back to Carbondale from the West to clear her name, according to a statement yesterday by Mrs. Hackers' sister, Mrs. Benjamin Owens of Carbondale. Just when her sister will arrive in Carbondale, Mrs. Owen's would not say, but she declared positively that it will be some day next week.

Mrs. Owens was indignant, she said, about an interview given to the newspapers by Rev. L. C. Murdock, D. D., and printed yesterday, regarding a conversation the clergyman had with her several days ago. She declared that she had told Dr. Murdock she wished to consult with her husband before making any admissions as to the whereabouts of her sister, and promised to write to him, telling what decision had been reached. She mailed a letter to Dr. Murdock yesterday morning, she said. Dr. Murdock is outside the city and will not return until tomorrow, but up to last evening, no letter postmarked Carbondale had been received at his residence, it was said.

It has been reported that Mrs. Hackers is on her way east to sue her husband for divorce, but Mrs. Owens refused to make any comment on that report. She referred inquiries to her sister's attorney, E. A. DeLaney, and Mr. DeLaney is on a vacation that will extend until next week. With Mrs. Hackers' denying that she knows the whereabouts of Rev. Mr. Signor, the mystery of the minister's disappearance is deeper than ever. It is said though, that friends of the missing minister have discovered a new clue as to his probable whereabouts, and that developments are looked for before next week is over.
----- *Scranton Republican*, July 28, 1911, page 5

In Letter to Her Sister Mrs. Hacker Defends Herself Against Serious Allegations
WASN'T WITH REV. SIGNOR

A letter from Mrs. Edward Hackers to her sister, Mrs. Benjamin Owens, of Carbondale, disclaiming all knowledge of the whereabouts of Rev. Watson B. Signor, the Methodist minister of Orson who mysteriously disappeared from Scranton July 10, apparently sets at rest the rumors spread by gossips that the minister and Mrs. Hackers were together

BETHANY WOMAN DENIES BEING WITH MISSING PREACHER

Mrs. Hackers was a resident of Bethany, Wayne County, and a member of Mr. Signor's congregation while he was stationed there four years ago. Following a visit with her sister in Carbondale, Mrs. Hackers and her son Harold went away a few weeks ago, a week or so before Mr. Signor disappeared. Her present whereabouts remains a secret with Mrs. Owens, for the reason that Mrs. Hacker has started a suit for divorce from her husband and does not want to be annoyed with his attentions. It was for the reason that he bothered her, according to Mrs. Owens, that she was forced to leave Carbondale. Mr. Signor went to Scranton from his home July 10 with his wife and son, Duane, to spend a few days here with friends. He left his wife and son to do an errand and has not been seen by friends or relatives since. Mrs. Signor and her son have returned to their home in Orson.

----- *Wilkes-Barre Times Leader*, July 25, 1911, page 3