History & Folklore

From Liberty Gazette, Thursday, March 10, 1977 –

1904 Cornerstone Returns Home



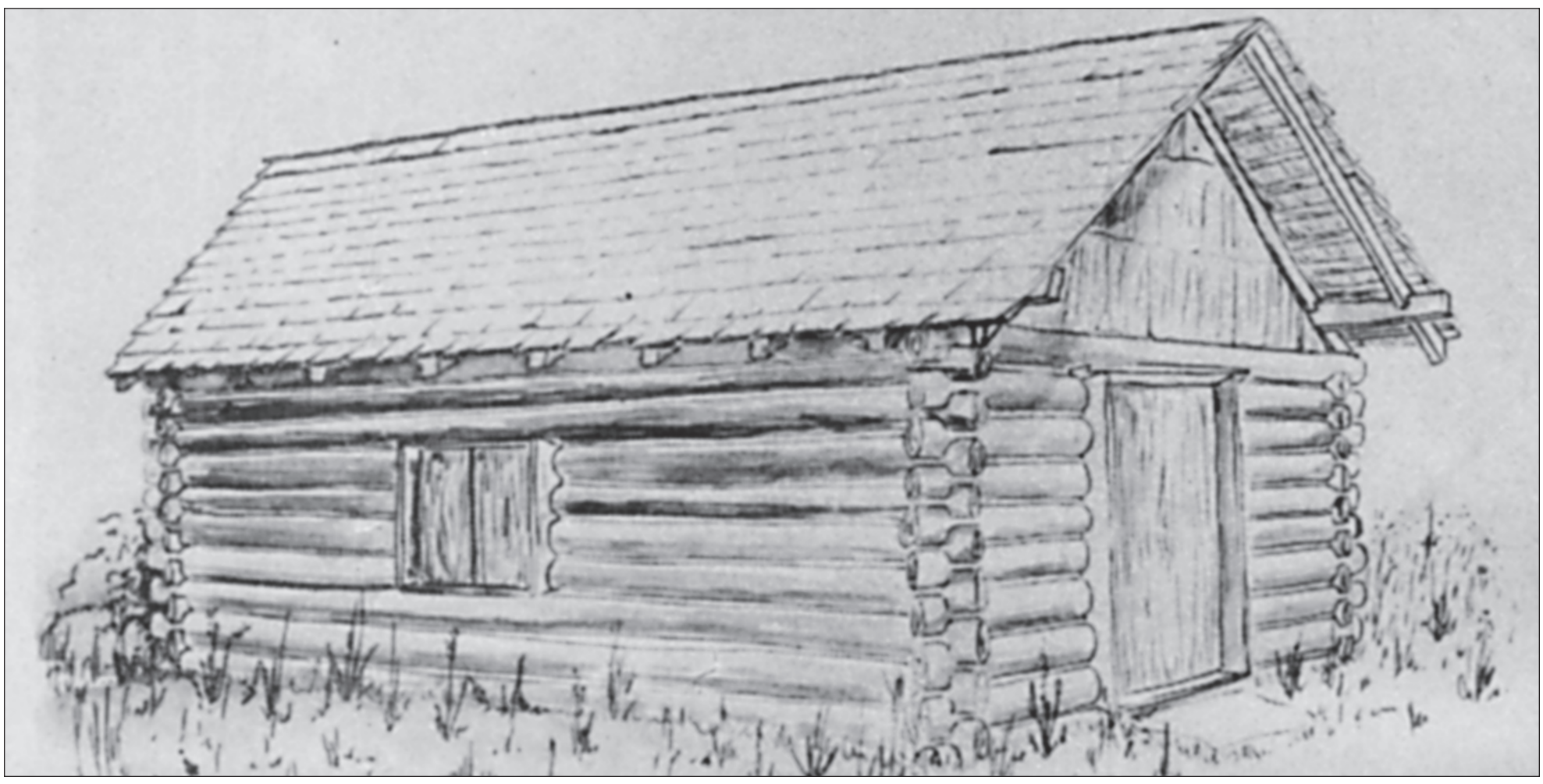
Thanks to Julian Ramirez of Beaumont we have in our possession once again the cornerstone of the two-room frame Liberty Methodist Church building, which was constructed at the corner of Main Street and Cos Avenue in 1904. The building was occupied through the 1930s when it was moved to the west side of the church property to make room for a new two-story brick church which now serves as the education building. After the 1904 church was sold for its lumber, the cornerstone was apparently lost or forgotten. As of this date we do not have any information concerning the original disposition of the cornerstone and its contents.

Several days ago, Mr. Julian Ramirez, an employee of R.T. Bishop Construction Company of Baytown, while on a construction job south of Liberty near the National Pipe and Tube Company plant, stumbled across a stone marker which he at first thought was a gravestone and later discovered that it was a concrete marker carrying the inscription, "M.E. Church South, Erected November 5, 1904." To Mr. Ramirez the initials M.E. had no meaning and therefore, he was not aware of what church this might have pertained to.

By a stroke of good fortune, C.J. Raggio, a local Exxon service station operator, noticed the stone in the back of Mr. Ramirez's pickup truck and then notified me and I promptly identified it as the 1904 cornerstone of the Liberty Methodist Church then known as the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. Mr. Ramirez was only too glad to place this stone into my possession so that it could be preserved. He was going to use it as a building block since he did not really know to whom it belonged. The day this stone was seen in Mr. Ramirez's truck was his last day in Liberty and if it had not been seen by Mr. Raggio at that time it probably would never have been identified and returned to this church.

Mr. Ramirez was shown pictures of this 1904 church building and he was very pleased that he had had a part in recovering this cornerstone for preservation by the church.

February 17, 1977
Chas. W. Fisher, Jr., chairman board of trustees
First United Methodist Church of Liberty



FIRST METHODIST CHURCH IN LIBERTY, 1846

This is an artist's conception of Liberty Methodist Church constructed of logs in 1846 on the northeast corner of the "Church Square" – now occupied by the Catholic parochial school building. From its date of organization in 1840 until 1846, the Methodists presumably held services in Liberty County's log and early-day frame courthouses and perhaps even held services in brush arbors and in the homes of members.

LIBERTY METHODIST CHURCH, 1854-1904

This is the second church occupied by the members of the Liberty Methodist Church. The church pictured was constructed in 1854 on the site of the present Methodist Sanctuary. It was occupied until 1904 when a new church was constructed on the corner of Main Street and Cos Avenue, and this building and lot were sold to W.S. Partlow who converted it to a general mercantile store. It was torn down in about 1936. This church was constructed after a storm had destroyed the Methodists' log church, which had been constructed in 1846 on the northeast corner of the "Church Square" – now occupied by the Catholic parochial school building.



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