

To faithfully record the life and [history] of a good and virtuous man, requires more than the fleeting reflections of a moment—more time than has fallen to my lot; and is a task, for which more than ordinary talents should be employed. Had I have had the time necessary for the undertaking, the data and memoranda before me, when considering the person of the subject now under consideration, I feel myself inadequate to do it justice; but how much more so, when, without the proper source of references, and in possession of but an impartial account, upon which to lay the foundation of our subject.

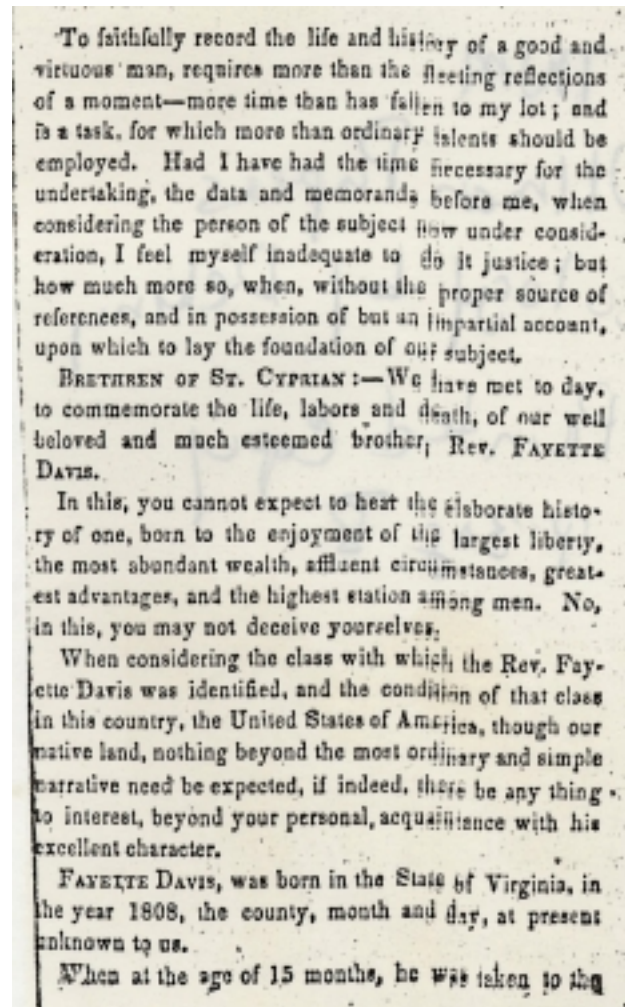
BRETHREN OF ST. CYPRIAN:— We have met to day, to commemorate the life, labors and death, of our well beloved and much esteemed brother, Rev. FAYETTE DAVIS.

In this, you cannot expect to hear the elaborate history of one, born to the enjoyment of the largest liberty, the most abundant wealth, affluent circumstances, greatest advantages, and the highest station among men. No, in this, you may not deceive yourselves.

When considering the class with which the Rev. Fayette Davis was identified, and the condition of that class in this country, the United States of America, though our native land, nothing beyond the most ordinary and simple narrative need be expected, if indeed, there be any thing to interest, beyond your personal, acquaintance with his excellent character.

FAYETTE DAVIS, was born in the State of Virginia, in the year 1808, the county, month and day, at present unknown to us.

When at the age of 15 months, he was taken to the



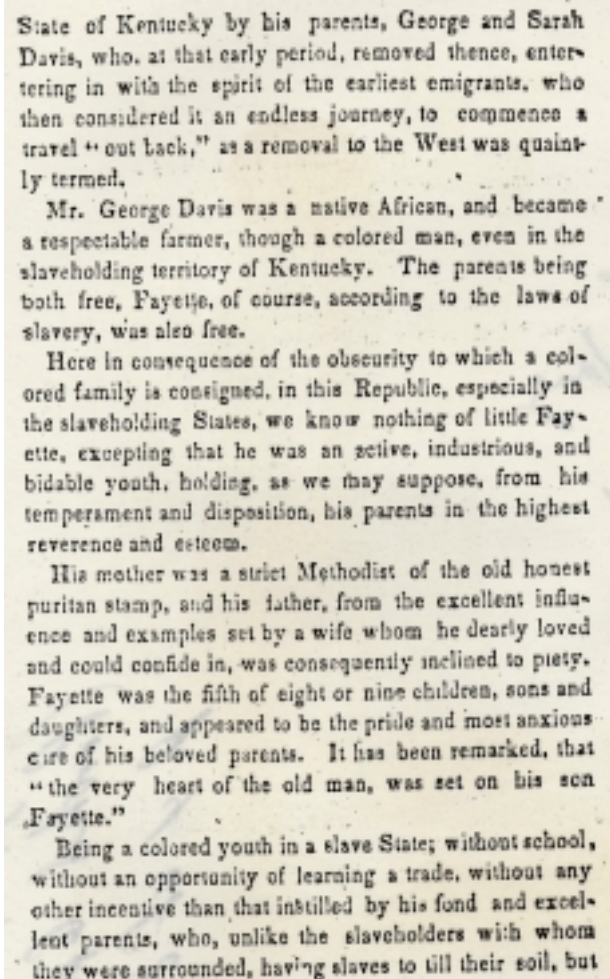
State of Kentucky by his parents, George and Sarah Davis, who, at that early period, removed thence, entering in with the spirit of the earliest emigrants[,] who then considered it an endless journey, to commence a travel “out back,” as a removal to the West was quaintly termed.

Mr. George Davis was a native African, and became a respectable farmer, though a colored man, even in the slaveholding territory of Kentucky. The parents being both free, Fayette, of course, according to the laws of slavery, was also free.

Here in consequence of the obscurity to which a colored family is consigned, in this Republic, especially in the slaveholding States, we know nothing of little Fayette, excepting that he was an active, industrious, and bidable youth, holding, as we may suppose, from his temperament and disposition, his parents in the highest reverence and esteem.

His mother was a strict Methodist of the old honest puritan stamp, and his father, from the excellent influence and examples set by a wife whom he dearly loved and could confide in, was consequently inclined to piety. Fayette was the fifth of eight or nine children, sons and daughters, and appeared to be the pride and most anxious care of his beloved parents. It has been remarked, that “the very heart of the old man, was set on his son Fayette.”

Being a colored youth in a slave State; without school, without an opportunity of learning a trade, without any other incentive than that instilled by his fond and excellent parents, who, unlike the slaveholders with whom they were surrounded, having slaves to till their soil, but



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cultivated it with their own hands; this instead of proving a stimulous to the then interesting boy Fayette, was rather looked upon by him, who, ambitious to equal his white comrades as degrading, because, in a slaveholding region, labor is considered as degrading by them the *whites*, at least the slaveholding portion of them. Thus, losing all hopes of equaling those whom he desired to rival in the avocations common to man, Fayette yielding to the mandates of the oppressors' notion of his propensity, threw himself on the broad ocean of chance, and engaged to travel as page to a monied Kentuckian. In this excursion, he traversed perhaps, the whole Southern country, where he was afforded ample opportunity of seeing the cruelties and horrors of American Slavery. Such scenes, as might naturally be expected, aroused his youthful soul to a sense of a loftier calling, and much higher duty. After an elapse of time, the wandering youth returned to the home of his fond and devoted parents in Kentucky, fully satisfied, that the life he had been lead[i]ng, was incompatible with his desires and determination for self-elevation.

When about the age of eighteen or nineteen, the year 1825 or 1826, Fayette became aroused to a sense of his condition by the awakening influence of the Holy Spirit. He became hopefully converted, and at once, attached himself to the Methodist Episcopal Church, (the whites.) He was almost immediately, after the then manner of the Methodists, promoted to the standing of a preacher. In this capacity, he traveled and preached throughout Kentucky, as well as in many of the more distant slaveholding States. And here we are compeiled to regret, that it is not in our possession at present, to give the name of

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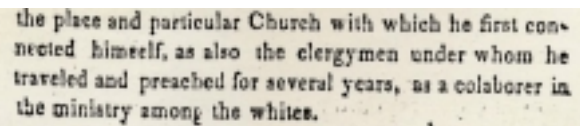
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the place and particular Church with which he first connected himself, as also the clergymen under whom he traveled and preached for several years, as a colaborer in the ministry among the whites.

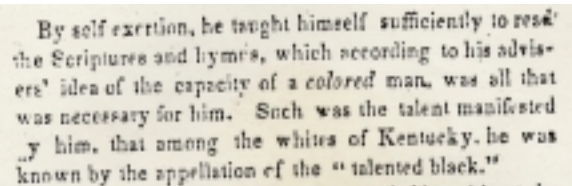
By self exertion, he taught himself sufficiently to read the Scriptures and hymns, which according to his advisers' idea of the capacity of a *colored* man, was all that was necessary for him. Such was the talent manifested [by] him, that among the whites of Kentucky, he was known by the appellation of the "talented black."

He continued in this Connexion, probably without the knowledge of the existence of any other body of Methodists, save that to which he was united, until the fall of 1830 or 1831, approaching the border of Ohio, he heard of the existence of the African Methodist Episcopal Church, as an independent body in this country. The Rev. Fayette Davis resolved to visit them; when during the same season, he visited a Camp Meeting held near Hillsborough, Highland Co., who becoming in consequence, so deeply interested in the welfare of his race, determined without the least hesitancy, on joining the Connexion. His colored brethren in Ohio became highly pleased with him, and designated him by the title of the "little Kentuckian," as a mark of fondness towards one whom they respected.

Returning home to Kentucky, he hesitated not to make known to his brethren in the Church, his full determination. They at once dissented from him, and used all their endeavors and influence to prevent what they conceived to be an unfavorable policy, if not a dangerous precedent—dangerous, because with him, he would carry at least the reflections of his enslaved brethren, before



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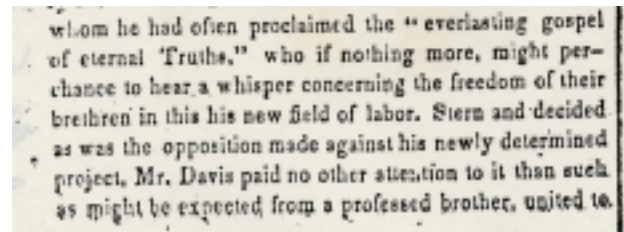
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whom he had often proclaimed the “everlasting gospel of eternal Truths,” who if nothing more, might perchance to hear a whisper concerning the freedom of their brethren in this his new field of labor. Stern and decided as was the opposition made against his newly determined project, Mr. Davis paid no other attention to it than such as might be expected from a professed brother, united to a people by all the ties of Christian friendship. His determination was fixed—the voice of his people called[,] and he obeyed.

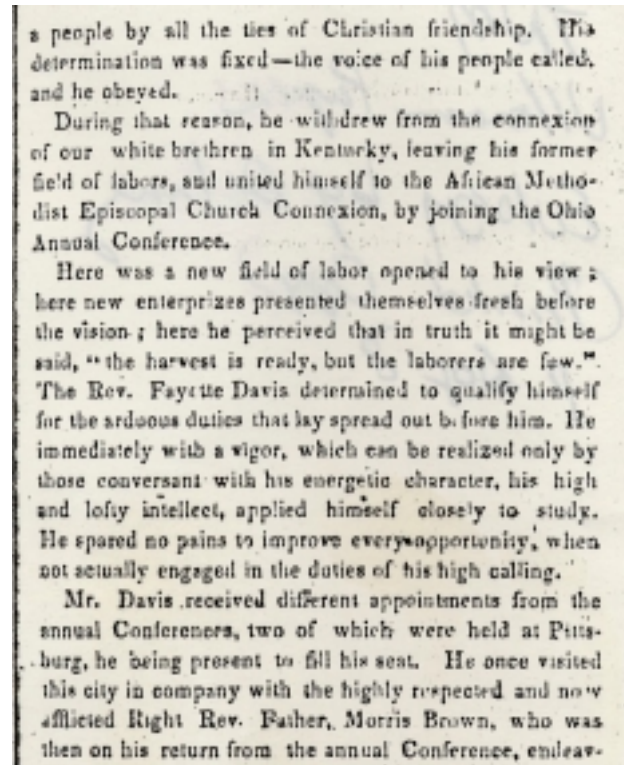
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Here was a new field of labor opened to his view; here new enterprizes presented themselves fresh before the vision; here he perceived that in truth it might be said, “the harvest is ready, but the laborers are few.” The Rev. Fayette Davis determined to qualify himself for the arduous duties that lay spread out before him. He immediately with a vigor, which can be realized only by those conversant with his energetic character, his high and lofty intellect, applied himself closely to study. He spared no pains to improve every opportunity, when not actually engaged in the duties of his high calling.

Mr. Davis received different appointments from the annual Conferences, two of which were held at Pittsburgh, he being present to fill his seat. He once visited this city in company with the highly respected and now afflicted Right Rev. Father, Morris Brown, who was then on his return from the annual Conference, endeavor-



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On the — day of —, 1838, he united his destiny in the sacred ties of matrimony, to *Elizabeth Tinson*, an amiable young woman, his present relict *now before us*; five children being the fruits of their union. This duty was performed at Zanesville, Ohio, by the Rev. Samuel Enty. Elder Davis in the year 1841, was appointed to the charge of Pittsburg Station. Here he had not long been, before there was a manifestation of the outpouring of the Spirit—a “season of refreshing,” to use the Christian language. He continued his labors during this Conference year, with an increased acknowledgment on the part of many, that they had made their peace with God. As they professed to grow in grace, their Pastor evident[ly] grew in their favor; none perhaps having previously borne so universal an esteem of the people as Elder Davis.

He was petitioned for, and reappointed to the Pittsburg Charge. In the winter of 1843, a Revival under the pastoral charge of Mr. Davis, again commenced, and continued successively, day and night, for nearly three months. So great was this Revival, that it was called by many the “Day of Pentecost.” Several hundred under the religious guidance of Pastor Davis, professed to be hopefully converted. Elder Davis still continued to grow in the favor of the people; not only of his own congregation, but those of other religious denominations. He was a third time appointed to the Pastoral Charge of what was then the Front St. Church. With unerring fidelity and Christian rectitude, as firm as what his course was marked with meekness, this good and pious man,

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He was removed from the Pittsburg Charge to the Washington Circuit, and that, because according to the Church Discipline, he could no longer be continued in the same s[t]ation. On this Circuit, with two successive appointments, he served the people of his [innerancy] with the same perseverance and Christian fortitude, which guided and directed his pathway while traveling amidst the obstacles and difficulties that beset him, while in our midst. He only left the people of his last charge, because they could not longer keep him.

At the last Annual Conference held at Cincinnati in the fall of 1846, Elder Davis was again returned to the embraces of his much beloved Pittsburg congregation, his pastoral charge being the Church in which we are at present assembled.

Who did not hail him with a brother's salutation, and greet him with the greetings of a brother? All who so much delighted to sit under the sound of his sonorous voice, which so often greeted our ears with those tender and endearing offerings, *Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!*

In this, the last year of his charge among men, he manifested more than usual determination—as though conscious of his approaching end and anxious for the issue, it appeared as if every word he uttered, emanated from the Throne itself borne by a messenger from on high. Who cannot recollect, while standing in the sacred desk, the lively expressions of his lighted countenance? It may truly be said of him, during the period of his last appointment, that he *served his Master, with*

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freedom, fervency and zeal.

It was during this period, that he first became introduced into this great brotherhood among men, by attaching himself to *St. Cyprian*; not however, without the determination of withdrawing from it so soon as he discovered anything contrary to the spirit of true Christianity. Finding nothing to operate against his conscience, he continued an exemplary and truly pious member to the last—frequently smiling at the idea that some persons form of the institution, taking the position that were there good in it, he desired to know it for the benefits of that good—if there was harm in it, he also desired to know it, in order to take advantage of that wrong. Paul, was able to declare to the gentiles, “whatsoever you are, that am I also,” and had the Apostle never studied Greek, he never could have read while passing through Athens, the inscription upon the Heathen altar, “To the unknown God,” by which he condemned them, by “words out of their own mouths.” But he found it a benevolent society, and he was satisfied, little regarding the name by which it was distinguished. *

Elder Davis, during his last year in Pittsburg, bore with him an expression, which plainly told of a physical disability, a constitutional declension, as well as an unusual mental exertion. Many of his friends felt considerable anxiety for his welfare, advising him to labor less and indulge himself more. At every meeting of the Church where duty called him, the Rev. Fayette Davis was found in his place.

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Elder Davis encouraged improvement, both by example and precept; he was the main spring of every effort at moral improvement among our people, emanating from the Church to which he belonged. With propriety it might have been said of him, "Behold! an Israelite indeed, in whom there is no guile."

On Tuesday, the 23d of March of the present year, 1847, when attempting to rise from a chair where he then was sitting in his own house, brother Davis swooned and fell prostrate at the feet of his affectionate wife, who screamed and clasped him in her arms; when he partially recovered, and by the assistance of friends, was laid upon his bed, never to rise again!

When able to speak audibly, he observed to his weeping wife—"wife, I wont be here long—I believe I should have gone then, but your lamentations aroused me; God knows what is best," or words to that effect. I called to see him on Friday afternoon, and in company with two clergymen, had my last pleasant conversation with him.

He suffered on under the kind and attentive treatment of a skillful Physician, until Sabbath the 28, at 8 o'clock in the morning, when his happy spirit left its earthly tabernacle, and took its flight to the realms of unspeakable bliss, there to dwell forever in *that house not made with hands, eternal in the Heavens*. His spirit has gone to God who gave it—may rest in end[le]ss peace!

Here sits his widowed consort and orphan children, left to us as a refuge in the time, of need. By the endearing ties of *Humanity, Friendship, and Brotherly Love*, I conjure you brethren, never to let the widow nor the orphan want; while you have a cent to divide with

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I would here introduce the name of the family physician [of] Elder Davis, who attended his family from his first appointment to Pittsburg until the day of his death, *Dr. E[.] Edrington*; who from that time until now, a period of nearly six years, has continued to give his services *without the hope of favor or reward*. Such disin[t]erested kindness in *Dr. Edrington*, should not be permitted to pass without deserved commendation.

It may be said that Elder Davis was not without his failings. This may be true, as no human being is without them. But whatever these may have been, we have yet got to learn them; indeed, the greatest complaints we ever heard against him were, that he was too sociable—that is, he treated everybody alike—or held himself superior to none.

It is true, that the relentless hand of calumny, once made an assassin stab at him, bit his undefi[n]ed character like gold seven times tried in the fire, only came forth the purer and shone with greater brilliancy. He was [a] devoted and dutiful child, assigning the only property which he had but partially secured in Ohio, to the use [of]

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his aged parent, who still reside on it during their natural life; a kind and affectionate husband, and tender [and] indulgent parent.

The wide field of usefulness which he beheld before him when he looked upon his brethren both nominally free and bond, induced him with all his might to hasten the accomplishment of his qualification. To this end he endeavored to embrace within the scope of his studies all the sciences both ancient and modern, and to this great uncommon exertion, do we mainly lay the untimely decline of his body and eventful end of his existence.

If Elder Davis were not learned, it were not his fault but misfortune—the want of an opportunity. If he were not wise, it were for the want of age and not intellect, [as] his mind was above the common order. But withal, [he] was *virtuous* and *good*, without which, he could not be, however learned, great and wise. Elder Fayette Davis, fell a self-martyr to the cause of his oppressed and down-trodden countrymen and brethren. He has yielded to the summons of grim monster Death—this mighty edifice *erected to God and the Holy Order*, had lost a column broken in the centre—a branch has been stripped from the olive tree; a sprig acacia, has been plucked from its new made soil. He died to answer the demands of impartial Justice; with a lively hope of immortality beyond the grave.

Brethren, let each and every one of us endeavor so to conduct ourselves, that when we come to leave the chequered pathway of this life; when we too like him, shall be summoned by the Grand Architect of the Universe, to retire from labor to deserved reward after a long, difficult, and tedious *sojourn*, being *led captive* by the enemy[.]

his aged parent, who still reside on it during their natural life; a kind and affectionate husband, and tender and indulgent parent.

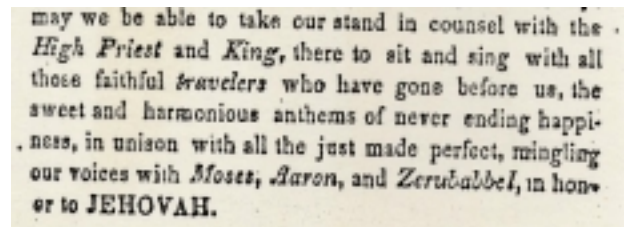
The wide field of usefulness which he beheld before him when he looked upon his brethren both nominally free and bond, induced him with all his might to hasten the accomplishment of his qualification. To this end he endeavored to embrace within the scope of his studies all the sciences both ancient and modern, and to this great uncommon exertion, do we mainly lay the untimely decline of his body and eventful end of his existence.

If Elder Davis were not learned, it were not his fault but misfortune—the want of an opportunity. If he were not wise, it were for the want of age and not intellect, his mind was above the common order. But withal, he was *virtuous* and *good*, without which, he could not be, however learned, great and wise. Elder Fayette Davis, fell a self-martyr to the cause of his oppressed and down-trodden countrymen and brethren. He has yielded

to the summons of grim monster Death—this mighty edifice *erected to God and the Holy Order*, has lost a column broken in the centre—a branch has been stripped from the olive tree; a sprig acacia, has been plucked from its new made soil. He died to answer the demands of impartial Justice; with a lively hope of immortality beyond the grave.

Brethren, let each and every one of us endeavor so to conduct ourselves, that when we come to leave the chequered pathway of this life; when we too like him, shall be summoned by the Grand Architect of the Universe, to retire from labor to deserved reward after a long, difficult, and tedious *sojourn*, being *led captive* by the enemy.

may we be able to take our stand in counsel with the *High Priest* and *King*, there to sit and sing with all those faithful *travelers* who have gone before us, the sweet and harmonious anthems of never ending happiness, in unison with all the just made perfect, mingling our voices with *Moses*, *Aaron*, and *Zerubbabel*, in honor to JEHOVAH.



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