

# INTENDED TO KIDNAP CHILD

---

John E. Lombard, of Channing, Mich., Boasted  
That He Would Have Little Roy Becker.

Lad Appealed to Priest for Protec-  
tion and Was Spirited Away.

---

Not in years have the residents of the Fourth ward been so full of wrath as they are today over the efforts of Mrs. Michael or Mrs. John E. Lombard of Channing, Mich., to secure the custody of her son, Edward LeRoy Becker.

The little boy, who is extremely popular in the Fourth ward, does not want to go to his mother and it is thought no court will give her the custody of the child when the facts are learned. In the meantime the child has been spirited away, as stated in The Crescent yesterday.

It was reported yesterday that Mrs. Lombard claimed that when she was granted a divorce from Peter J. Becker in Milwaukee about ten years ago she was given the custody of the daughter while the father was given the son but that it was stipulated in the decree that should either parent die the other should have the custody of both children, and she went to Milwaukee yesterday at noon to get a copy of the decree.

A representative of The Crescent called at the home of Mrs. Becker on Lake street last night and was shown a copy of the divorce decree. The divorce was granted by Judge Lawrence W. Halsey on Jan. 22, 1904, less than four years ago. The decree shows that the divorce was granted to Emma Becker after Peter J. Becker had withdrawn his answer and denial to the complaint by agreement. The mother was given the custody of the daughter, Anne Estella Becker, who will be 10 years of age on Nov. 29; the father was given the custody of the son, Edward LeRoy Becker, who was 12 years of age on July 1, but no provision was made in case of the death of either parent.

After his wife left him Becker placed his son in the care of his father and mother, the child's grandparents in Milwaukee, where he remained until Mr. Becker was married again when he came to this city to live with his father and step mother, who has been like a mother to him.

Last December when Peter Becker was lying on his death bed and realized that the end was near, a close friend asked him to give him the boy to raise but the child wanted to remain with his stepmother and stepsisters and they pleaded to keep him and Mr. Becker, in the presence of witnesses, left him in Mrs. Becker's custody.

Tuesday afternoon, while returning home from the Sacred Heart parochial school, where he is one of the brightest pupils, little Roy Becker saw his own mother on the street and knew at once that she was looking for him. He was afraid to go home but instead ran as fast as his little legs would carry him to the residence of the Rev. Father F. L. Ruessmann and begged the priest to protect him from his mother.

The kind father took the lad to his

e | home and told Mrs. Becker if he was  
a | wanted at any time to call him. An  
f | hour later, about 6 o'clock a strange  
- | man entered the Becker saloon and  
e | asked for the boy and made his boasts  
7 | to the boarders in the saloon that he  
 | would have the child.

| The man told one he was a railroad  
t | man from Wausau, to another he was a  
t | lumber man from Amherst and to still  
f | another he was from Stevens Point. His  
 | boasts and threats frightened Mrs.  
 | Becker and she called an officer to whom  
 | the man refused to talk. He would not  
 | give his name or his business at first,  
 | but when threatened with arrest, wrote  
 | his name as John E. Lombard, Chan-  
 | ning, Mich.

| At the Becker saloon he denied that  
 | he was married but later when the of-  
 | ficer went with him to the Manitowoc  
 | house he pointed to a woman who was  
 | seated at a table, and who proved to  
 | be Becker's first wife, the child's own  
 | mother, and said she was his wife.

The officer wanted Lombard and his wife to keep away from the Becker home and then hastening back to the house took little Roy to the Sacred Heart parsonage where he was placed in charge of Father Ruessmann and remained over night. Yesterday morning he was spirited away from the city, and is now in the custody of friends many miles from Appleton.

As stated in The Crescent yesterday, Mrs. Lombard, accompanied by Under-sheriff George Hauser, visited the paroehial and public schools and many stores and residences in the Fourth ward yesterday morning in an effort to locate the boy.

At noon yesterday Mrs. Lombard went to Milwaukee but Lombard and little Anna Becker remained in Appleton and Lombard remained in the neighborhood of the Becker home all afternoon. He would send the little girl in the saloon to buy a bottle of beer, and when it was refused her she inquired for her brother.

for her brother.

Late in the afternoon Lombard became so obnoxious that the police were again called and he refused to move until compelled by force to do so. Mrs. Lombard returned from Milwaukee last night and more developments are expected during the day.

**The Post-Crescent**  
Appleton, WI  
Saturday, September 14, 1907

Page 1, Columns 3 & 4