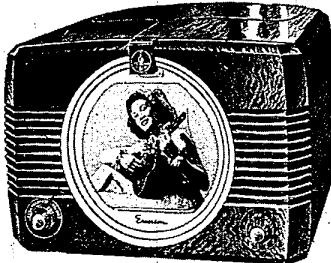


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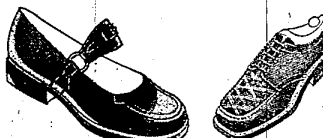
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Universalist History:

Two Groups Combine To Form Universalist Church Congregation

(EDITOR'S NOTE — The Universalist Church at Warner and Thomas Streets, Farmington's oldest house of worship, is preparing to celebrate its 100th anniversary in 1953. Apropos of this centennial, The Farmington Enterprise is publishing a series of articles on the church's history, of which this is the seventh. Readers are advised to clip and save these articles. A limited number of extra copies of The Enterprise will be available for mailing to friends.)

VII. — UNITY

The turn of the century saw the rounding-out of a movement that had begun soon after the close of the Civil War — a merger of the Union Society and the Farmington Universalist Church.

Present-day members of the church are not completely able to explain why the two societies should have insisted for nearly 40 years on keeping separate minutes and financial records, for the congregation met simultaneously to be addressed by the same Universalist minister, and oftentimes one person was regarded as a member of both groups.

The reasons, although now obscured, must have been definite and deep-seated. The chief one appears to have been the impression that many persons who shied away from the "heretic" term Universalism might feel free to attend a "Union" church.

Discussions concerning the proposed merger had been frequent over the years. Some got into the minutes. The Rev. A. M. Sovie spoke on the topic at meetings in 1878 and '79.

Perhaps one of the principal forces to impel unity was the collaboration of the two societies in the rebuilding project of 1900-01. Men who worked side by side with crow, hammer and paint brush were inclined to swap views and become pretty pass-wais.

Whatever the causes, the merger was eventually effected. Here is the brief official notation contained in the minute-book of the Union Society, November 4, 1905:

"Moved and supported that the name of the Union Society be dropped and Universalist adopted instead; that the trustees be elected as in the Union Society."

For more than a century the names of certain families have been perpetually on the rolls of the Farmington church. Like the warp of a fabric the long lines of these families have run throughout the length of the web. Others, antagonistic to the web, have appeared for a time and then vanished, sometimes to reappear, some times into the void.

Two families in particular have been ever present in the fabric of Farmington Universalism, the Greens and the Steeles.

This history touched on the early career of Addis Emmet Green as a Farmington man who had gone west with the Gold Rush. He was a son of Zephaniah Ripley and Zerilla Gould Green, who came to Oakland County in 1832 from New York State and were loyal members of the Farmington Union Church from its inception.

The pattern of Emmet Green's life was laid out early and, except for his jaunt to California, was carried out consistently: he was farmer, teacher and Universalist.

He began teaching at 19. He rose in the profession to be superintendent of Farmington Township schools (1877 - 80) and, literally the intellectual head of the community.

He and Miss Cordelia Adeline Smith of Novi were married October 1, 1856, by the Rev. Henry L. Hayward of Farmington. Throughout their long lives the Greens were active Universalists.

In 1871 Mr. Green became a trustee of the Union Society, and at the same time Mrs. Green was elected treasurer of the Universalist Society. From that time until after the turn of the century both continued to hold offices in the church — secretary, trustee, treasurer, chairman, delegate to State Convention, etc.

On May 12, 1901, Mr. Green was admitted to the Universalist Church of which his wife was treasurer. In 1903 he was elected Universalist treasurer and his wife a trustee, and at the same time he was president of the Union Society's board. Certainly Mr. and Mrs. Emmet Green were strong proponents of church unity.

The Greens raised a family of five children at their Fourteen Mile Road farm. A daughter, Mary Shaw Green, became treasurer of the Farmington church in 1913, two years after her father's death at 83, thus carrying on the family's Universalist tradition. (She also was a school teacher.)

Miss Green, last survivor of the five children, although 82 and crippled, aided greatly in the preparation of this history. She recalled the circumstances of the Deity's Loucheux will case, which has been of considerable importance to the Farmington church.

Mrs. Longnecker, a Wixom resident who died in 1911, bequeathed the income of her estate in perpetuity to the Farmington Universalist Church with the provision that if at any time the society ceased to exist the income should pass to the Michigan Universalist Convention.

Miss Green, as treasurer, represented the church in the matter of the estate. Since her retirement this representation has passed to Frank N. Steele, and this brings up the other of those two long line families whose history is so intertwined with that of the church.

Frank Steele's father, Carlos was the son of Edward Steele, who in 1827 with his brother Harman established the first gristmill in the southwestern part of Oakland County, the dam being at what is now Drake and Howard Roads.

As a 16-year-old boy Carlos Steele drew (that is, hauled) flour by ox team to Detroit, a 24-hour trip.

In 1866 he and Miss Ella Nelson, a Corunna (Mich.) Universalist, were married by the Rev. C. W. Knickerbocker, who was pastor in both Farmington and Corunna.

"Thenceforth, in good times and in bad, the Steeles, their children, grandchildren, nephews and nieces have been staunch Universalists, even to this day. At times the family has formed the very backbone of the congregation.

Another factor in that, served to bind together the Farmington Universalists over the years has been the influence of the Church of Our Father in Detroit.

For a long while, except for the period from 1907 until 1910 when the Rev. Frank Miller was in Farmington (Continued on Page Nine)

Jefferson Jottings

By MRS. NORMAN MOORE
21719 Jefferson, Phone 2762-J

Captain and Mrs. Karl Smith and daughter spent the week with his mother, Mrs. Estelle Sigmon of Jefferson Street. They are from Denver, Colorado.

Mr. and Mrs. George Meisner had their niece, Little Earlene, as their guest.

Mrs. William Manning, formerly of Jefferson Street, now living in Detroit, visited her many friends and relatives here Sunday afternoon.

Barbara Ann and Deanna Devins stayed several days with their cousins, Norman, Patsy, Donnie and Bobby Moore.

Sunday was a busy day around our house when many of our relatives paid us a visit. Among them were Mr. and Mrs. Barker of Ferndale, Eunie and her family, Mr. and Mrs. John Devins of Detroit, Mr. and Mrs. Ross Moore and the Ernest Moores.

There will be a meeting of fruit growers at the home of newly appointed Apple Commissioner Ralph Foreman, 59050 West Seven Mile Road, Thursday evening, August 16, according to Assistant County Agriculture Agent Willard E. Brossman.

FRUIT GROWERS TO MEET

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