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The history of the Universalist Church in Iowa, 1843-1943

Elva Louise Tucker
University of Iowa

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THE HISTORY OF THE UNIVERSALIST CHURCH IN IOWA: 1843-1943

by

Elva Louise Tucker

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of Master of Arts, in the Department of
History, in the Graduate College of the
State University of Iowa

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Chapter I

They walked in heavy twilight-
 These children of the same great God;
 They groped and held each other's hands
 And yet were unafraid;
 Far off beyond the skyline
 Truth's lamp was trimmed and flaring-
 Right well they knew its rays would come
 To melt the chilling shade.

They sang with clear-toned accents
 And heard no anthems save their own;
 They wandered through Doubt's sterile fields
 Where weeds of Hate grew rank;
 They met with hordes of scoffers
 Who clogged their path with pitfalls
 And yet they never took their gaze
 From Truth's fair sunset bank.

They left the misty valley,
 In spite of gales that lashed the trees;
 And through the tempest's stinging breath
 They climbed a rugged slope;
 They paused upon the summit
 And raised a simple altar,
 Beneath a span of sky made clear
 By golden stars of Hope.

Truth's blessed flame still gladdens
 These hearts which pulse with richer life;
 It's rays were piercing through the haze
 To guide the seeking soul;
 Here Reason bids a welcome
 To any earnest pilgrim,
 Who yearns to find a comradeship
 With God the Common goal!¹

Jay G. Sigmund

¹Rev. W. A. W. Argow, An Historical Sketch of the People's Church, 1925.

Chapter I

ON THE IOWA FRONTIER

Universalists were among the early settlers who moved into the Iowa Territory. Their first churches were organized before Iowa became a state. For a full century they have preached, taught and tried to live their faith that "God is Love", that he is the father of all mankind; and that they are all brothers who will ultimately be gathered safely into their Father's house. They have continued to be defenders of the free spirit in religion. In order to understand and appreciate the story of the liberal religious group known as Universalists, one must know something about both the Universalist movement and the character of the people who migrated to this part of the middle west, some of whom were already of that faith.

The philosophy of Universalism is old, and not exclusively American. Many of the group leaders assert that it was in fact the belief of many early Christians. Thomas Whittemore wrote a book entitled The Plain Guide to Universalism in 1842 in which he stated, "We find distinct traces of Universalism in the Christian Church immediately after the age of the Apostles -- and it is worthy of remark that a belief in the final salvation of all men was not made a subject either of objection or reproach, for two or three hundred years after the death of Christ."²

² Alfred S. Cole, "Historical Backgrounds of the Universalist Movement," The Christian Leader, Boston, Sept. 25, 1937, p. 1223.

However, as a separate ecclesiastical group under this name, it is distinctly American. Richard Eddy, a Universalist historian wrote, it "is of American origin taking its rise in the very birthday of the new nation and largely helped on its career by men foremost in the political struggle for political liberty."³

On the northeast Atlantic seaboard the protest against the severity of Calvinism reached such proportions that the stage was set for an organization to crystallize that protest and give it the force of a united effort. England gave some of the leaders for the movement and America supplied the setting, the following, and the leaders of its maturity. Dr. George de Benneville, born in England of French Huguenot ancestry, was driven from England to Germany. After eighteen years there he came to America and settled in Germantown, Pennsylvania, where he practiced medicine and without monetary compensation preached of universal salvation.⁴

John Murray became a disciple in England of James Rely who taught that the joy of salvation would come to all men. The former became active in the ministry until the death of his wife and his own persecutions discouraged him. In 1770, at the age of twenty-nine he came to America resolving never to preach again.⁵ Because of a calm he

³ Richard Eddy, D. D., History of Universalism in America, New York, 1894, p. 493.

⁴ Gertrude Earle, The Beginnings of the Universalist Church, (Rev.) Boston, 1940, pp. 11-12.

⁵ Ibid., p. 6.

landed on the Jersey shore and asked Thomas Potter for food for the crew of the "Hand-in-Hand." The Jersey farmer had built a meeting house and was waiting for a minister, who was a liberal, to use it. He had told the Baptists they could have it if they would prove that God was a Baptist.⁶ He persuaded Murray to preach the following Sunday for he said, "You are the preacher for whom I have been waiting,"⁷ and that sermon was justification for his faith and hope. Murray became the apostle of universal salvation to the American people. He traveled up and down the eastern sea-coast preaching his doctrine and found many who were ready followers, some who had read de Benneville's works, but many to whom it was a new but an acceptable doctrine. At first there was no hostility and he received more invitations to preach than he could accept.⁸

The religious stage of America was set for John Murray in 1770. The severity of the Calvinistic doctrines of predestination, particular redemption, total depravity, effectual calling, final perseverance, and an everlasting hell inevitably brought revolt. Jonathan Edwards preached and wrote of "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God" to scare men into accepting salvation. But such a creed caused much mental anguish and suffering; it so debased and belittled both God and man that the sensitive human

⁶ Cole, loc. cit., p. 1224.

⁷ Earle, op. cit., p. 6.

⁸ Cole, loc. cit., p. 1224.

constitution revolts against whatever becomes "insupportably repugnant," as one historian has stated it. "The religion of Jesus was born as a protest against the militarism, the materialism and the mammonism of the Roman Empire in the days of the Caesars. The Protestant Reformation was born out of the revolt against the mammonism and materialism and ritualism into which the church had fallen in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Universalism and Unitarianism were protests against the extreme Calvinism of the nineteenth century in New England."⁹

There was a general attitude of revolt against absolutism in politics and in religion. The Revolutionary War was an expression of the former and Universalism was an expression of the latter. Democracy was broadening. Men were thinking profoundly on subjects of government, human and divine. If it was unjust for a King to do just as he pleased, it was also unjust for the Creator to do so; either human or divine laws should control. If it was unjust to have a privileged class in the state, it was unjust to have a privileged few who should enjoy salvation.¹⁰

The Universalist Church was born at a time when all America was fermenting with revolt. Murray's "theology became a rallying point for those discontented and adventurous persons who were sick of autocracy whether political or

⁹ Edgar Rubey Harlan, A Narrative History of the People of Iowa, Chicago and New York, 1931, Vol. II, p. 466.

¹⁰ Cole, loc. cit., p. 1223.

religious."¹¹ Individuals and groups who had been waiting for just such a leader joined him. The early Universalists were drawn from all denominations. In this they were different from the early Unitarians.

"The Universalist Movement was a pioneer movement. Individuals or small groups of people came out from established churches and gradually rallied around Murray's banner or under Winchester's leadership. Organization naturally was slow in development. On the other hand many of the Congregational Churches were taken over bodily by the Unitarians --- they had 'an organization, a church, and a certain financial stability'".¹²

John Murray, the itinerant preacher, was called to be the minister at Gloucester, Massachusetts, where the First Independent Church in America was organized. It was this group that fought and won, with the help of their leader, the battle for the right of every man to support and attend any church he chose, or none at all. It was a long and bitter struggle.

"Murray was mobbed and ordered out of town as an undesirable citizen, called a traitor although he had been for nearly a year a chaplain in Washington's army, denounced as a Romanist, and cursed and stoned. He was fined for performing the marriage service, the claim being that his was not a real church and he was not a legal minister. His parishioners were harassed and persecuted, their goods were seized and sold for the benefit of the church they refused to support, and one man, for resisting the authorities who came to take away his property, was sent to jail."¹³

There were two trials before the case was finally

¹¹ Ibid., p. 1223.

¹² Ibid., p. 1223.

¹³ Ibid., p. 1224.

settled by the Massachusetts Supreme Court in 1786,¹⁴ and both verdicts were in favor of the Universalist group and religious freedom.

For thirty years there was no common platform among these liberal groups, and so no organized body, that could be called a church. Then, in order to be exempt from the tax to support the Orthodox church, and to weld a closer fellowship and a greater unity of faith and purpose among the scattered Universalists, they adopted in 1790, a creed, which was written by Dr. Benjamin Rush, "the most eminent Universalist layman of his day."¹⁵ There were two factions within the new movement. One was led by John Murray, who believed that all souls will be restored and at death saved; the other by Elhanan Winchester, a profound Biblical scholar, who held that future punishment was necessary to discipline and reform the sinner before final salvation. The Philadelphia Declaration did not long endure, because of the change in theology brought about by the denomination's greatest intellectual and spiritual leader, Hosea Ballou. "This man with a forceful, original mind put a firm foundation under the rather shaky pillars of the new movement." His ideas supplanted those of the previous leaders because they were better organized, more consistent, and more powerful in their drive. Therefore,

¹⁴

Frederick William Perkins, Beliefs Commonly Held Among Us, Boston, 1940, p. 40.

¹⁵

Perkins, op. cit., p. 31..

at the New England Convention which met at Winchester, New Hampshire, in September 1803, a new creed was adopted, and this remained the statement of the Universalist belief until 1899.¹⁶ This profession contained three articles

- "1. We believe that the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments contain a revelation of the character of God, and of the duty, interest, and final destination of mankind.
- "2. We believe there is one God, whose nature is love; revealed in one Lord Jesus Christ, by one Holy Spirit of Grace, who will finally restore the whole family of mankind to holiness and happiness.
- "3. We believe that holiness and true happiness are inseparably connected; and that believers ought to maintain order, and practice good works, for these things are good and profitable unto men."¹⁷

A liberty clause was attached which read:

"While we adopt a general Profession of Belief we leave it to the churches and societies to continue or adopt within themselves such more particular articles of faith as may appear to them best under their peculiar circumstances, provided that they do not disagree with our general profession or plan."¹⁸

This was the profession of faith that the Universalists who came to Iowa brought with them in the pioneering years. It formed the basis for debate and controversy in the days of such leaders as Erasmus Manford, John Hughes, H. Cole, T. C. Eaton, Thomas Ballinger, A. R. Gardner, J. S. Dennis, Joy Bishop, Joel C. Garretson, T. H. Darnelle, Philander Smith, Joshua Hicks and J. J. Austin.

While this religious group was growing and

¹⁶ Cole, loc. cit., Oct. 2, 1937, p. 1257.

¹⁷ Cole, loc. cit., p. 1257.

¹⁸ Perkins, op. cit., p. 43.

developing in philosophy and numbers, the thirteen American colonies became an independent nation. They set up a government, reorganized their economic life, and people continued to migrate to the new territories as the older ones became occupied. There was a continual westward drift of the population. The migrants carried with them their social, cultural, political and economic ideas and ideals. Those who broke home ties to move westward were often the most courageous and the most independent in spirit. Dissatisfied with conditions in their own locality, they had the courage to strike out into the little known and thinly populated regions in quest of an opportunity to build anew. It was natural for this type of person to become a Universalist. Such a one had to be a pioneer in spirit, even in the seaboard region to accept this new unpopular religion. These people, because they were the stuff of which pioneers are made, were found in the westward movement in greater numbers than their relative strength in the settled areas would indicate. By the records of the General Convention we can trace their westward course. Universalist services were held in the state of Illinois by 1812, in Indiana and Michigan in the 1820's, in Iowa and Missouri in the 1830's, in Wisconsin, Mississippi, California, and Tennessee in the 1840's, in Texas and Kansas in the 1850's, and in Nebraska in the 1860's. The first record of the preaching of Universalism in Iowa was in 1837 by the Rev. A. R.

Gardner.¹⁹ He was active in Iowa two years before Abner Kneeland fled to Van Buren County. The latter was a Baptist minister who became a Universalist and served brilliantly in the ministry for twenty-five years. Then he became a pantheist. Convicted by the courts of Massachusetts on a charge of blasphemy he was sentenced to a jail term of sixty days. The leading men of his time defended his right to freedom of speech and worship under the Constitution, and the furore over his case was so great that no one has since been so charged in an American court. He never recovered from the humiliation, and being unable to live it down in the East he came west to Iowa and settled near the present site of Farmington where he lived until 1844.²⁰ His philosophy colored the ideas of the people in that region so that Universalist circuit riders always found a welcome among liberal thinkers in that locality.

From whence did the people come who settled in Iowa in the early days? John Ely Briggs wrote in Iowa Old and New that "more than four-fifths of the people who have lived in Iowa at any time since settlement began over a hundred years ago have been native Americans... Their former homes had been in Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, Kentucky and the older states where they or their parents were born. It was natural, however, that some^{of the} European immigrants should find

¹⁹ Richard Eddy, D. D., History of Universalism, New York, 1894, pp. 441 - 443.

²⁰ Mary R. Whitcomb, "Abner Kneeland", Annals of Iowa, Vol. 6, 1903 --1905, p. 341.

their way to Iowa. The first to arrive were much pleased with the region west of the Mississippi." They wrote enthusiastically to their relatives and friends of this wonderful place, of this country of political and religious freedom, where slavery had never existed, a land of agricultural opportunity. By 1850 ---- only eleven out of every hundred had been born in foreign countries.²¹

From where did these native born Americans come? Some say that the migration was largely from the New England area while others assert that our culture has been greatly influenced by southern pioneers. In this story of Universalism it is important only that most of the Universalists of that time were in the coastal region north of Virginia; that even today New England is the section where this group is strongest.

T. S. Parvin says the pioneers of Iowa

"came from New England states, the younger generation directly, the older having migrated at an earlier day and located for a time in the middle states of that period and there remained long enough to become somewhat westernized. They were from New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois. There was an element of chivalry, descendants of the old cavaliers of Virginia, some of whom had come through the bloody ground experience of Kentucky and Tennessee; these were found mostly in the southern portion of the territory."²²

"The New Englander has always been in evidence in Iowa and his influence manifest..... In 1834 the name of Iowa's capital city was changed from 'Flint

²¹

John Ely Briggs, Iowa Old and New, New York, 1939, p. 171.

²²

Theodore Sutton Parvin, Who Made Iowa, Davenport, 1896, p. 13.

Hills' to Burlington, at the behest of John Gray, a son of Vermont. Father Asa Turner, a son of Yale, while on a missionary expedition in 1836 found a settlement of New Englanders at Crow Creek in Scott County. Stephen Whicher, himself from the Green Mountains, found 'some families of high polish from the city of New York' in Bloomington [Muscatine] in October, 1838. In all missionary and educational endeavors in Iowa, New Englanders have from the first played conspicuous parts and have been potent factors in the development of the State."²³

"The New Englanders were conspicuous, energetic and vocal prior to 1840; they were disputatious and vigorous promoters of their ideals of government, law and morals, and religion prior to 1860; but neither they nor their kith and kin from New York and Ohio were supreme in Iowa in those days."²⁴

For as F. I. Herriot points out town meetings were conspicuously absent in Iowa; the New Englander's love and respect for law and order have been rather absent in the boisterous carousals of the Iowa frontier; education has been promoted by the missionary and not by popular action; Iowans are more easy going than the New Englander and yet more individualistic. Both the early civil and military leaders of the region were southerners, principally from Kentucky, Virginia, and Maryland.²⁵

Prior to 1845 people came by nature's water ways to Iowa from Kentucky, Tennessee, Missouri, Wisconsin and Illinois. After that people began coming in an overland tide by covered wagon, and by 1860 the railroads running across the country from east to west facilitated the

²³ Frank I. Herriott, "Whence Came the Pioneers," Annals of Iowa (3) Vol. VII, Apr. 1906, pp. 369 - 70.

²⁴ Ibid., p. 373.

²⁵ Ibid., pp. 373, - 78.

migration of the northeasterner. Therefore the pioneer "population [of Iowa] was an infusion of peoples hailing from various regions."²⁶

Mr. Julius H. Powers in the Iowa Senate in 1859 wrote "Two tides had flowed into Iowa in populating the State, one from the east, bringing the New England element and habits, with its memory of town meetings and individual rights, and one from the south bringing with it the southern element with its thoughts and polity. In the early settlement of the State the southerner had largely predominated, and the State's early organization was fashioned and molded by that influence."²⁷

Iowa was populated by people from many states and others from foreign lands. They brought their acquired economic, social, and political patterns to a pioneer environment, and both were modified by the contact.

"States or societies, no less than individuals, are the outgrowth of heredity and environment....We certainly cannot understand the nature and significance of the customs and institutions of a people ... unless we know the character of the environment of that people.

A people cannot break with its past nor discard inherited political and social ideas any more than a man can put away his youth and its influences. Social or political life may be greatly modified by the necessities of a new environment but heredity and ancestral traditions continue to exert a potent influence."²⁸

²⁶ Ibid., July, 1906, p. 460.

²⁷ Ibid., pp. 462- 63.

²⁸ Ibid., pp. 367- 68.

Since the population was a fusion of many classes from several regions there would necessarily be considerable friction on economic, political, social, and religious questions. The frontier did modify the habits and thinking of these people by scattering them over a wide undeveloped area where they must be resourceful, self-reliant, and adaptable in order to survive. Where democracy prevailed, every man was the equal of his neighbor regardless of his social or economic position back East, or down South; and everyone was measured by the yard stick of what he was as a person and what he could do. His life was one of unremitting labor with infrequent house-raisings, weddings, or husking-bees for recreation. Religious services brought relief from toil, a chance to meet other people and so were considered a mode of recreation as well as a form of worship.

"In the early settlement of Iowa, as has been the case in all parts of our land and in every period of its history, the religious phase of social life among the pioneers was by no means overlooked or regarded with indifference; but on the contrary called into exercise the best energies of those who in former homes in other states or countries of the old world had received a religious training, and who knew by experience something of the importance and value of Christian institutions."²⁹

In the earliest days people came eagerly to a "preaching" in a settler's home or in the log court house. They wore calico and homespun and they listened attentively to the preaching of whatever itinerant minister chanced to

²⁹ Rev. E. Skinner, History of Black Hawk County, Iowa, Edited by Isaiah Van Metre, Chicago, 1904, p. 242.

be passing that way. In any part of this territory there could be found a wide diversity of theological belief. There were Methodists, Baptists, Presbyterians, Congregationalists, Catholics, Quakers, Dunkers, United Brethern, Rappists, Mormons, Millerites, Mennonites, Campbellites, Dutch Reformed, Disciples, Universalists and Unitarians and a number of others. "There was something for everyone; medieval mysticism, modern rationalism, ebullient emotionalism."³⁰

A typical Iowa community at Pilot Grove was described by O. A. Garretson.

"Four church organizations were maintained in the town: Baptist, Presbyterian, Friends and Universalists. Only two church buildings were erected, however - Baptist and Quaker. The Presbyterians held their services in the Baptist church while the Universalists occupied the public hall. The town was well supplied with ministers. Samuel Pickard and Zehn Leweling taught that immersion was essential to salvation. [The] Reverend [Mr.] Mc Night preached the time-honored doctrine of election, while at the head of the Quaker meeting sat Ephraim B. Ratcliff who, on occasion when the spirit moved him to utterance, proclaimed the glad tidings of peace on earth and good will to men. Joshua Hicks and Joel C. Garretson believed that as Christ came to seek and to save that which was lost He would through God's infinite love finally restore the whole family of mankind to holiness and happiness. Thus the various phases of religious thought had their adherents and devoted champions."³¹

The description by W. H. Venable of what occurred in pioneer Ohio sounds very much like Iowa in the last

30

Harrison John Thornton, "The National Scene," The Palimpsest, vol. 14., 1933, p. 50.

31

O. A. Garreston, "Pilot Grove," The Palimpsest, vol. 3, 1922, p. 396.

century.

"The action and reaction of colliding elements struck out much intellectual light and heat. Civilized races met with savage, Christianity met Judaism, Protestant challenged Catholic, Calvinist encountered anti-Calvinist, Unitarian opposed Trinitarian, old denominations split by contention projected new sects into being, and each new sect criticised all the others --- I doubt if the world has witnessed a more extraordinary series of religious events than transpired in the Ohio valley in the first half of the nineteenth century.... Religious liberty ran riot ---- the clash of creeds gave origin to much discourse, oral and printed. Sermons and religious debates were heard by multitudes of listeners, and read by other multitudes."³²

"One who knew these people well was wont to say that ninety per cent of the early population of Iowa were members of our various democratic churches."³³ Many of the early settlers were the descendants of the dissenters who had come to America to escape interference in their religious lives. The Europeans, who were communicants of the aristocratic and authoritarian churches, had not yet come in large numbers.

William Salter, one of the famous "Iowa Band" of Congregational missionaries from Andover, who came to the Iowa Territory in the 1840's, kept a diary which reveals that there were indeed Universalists there in that day, in fact more than he wished or else he noted them because they especially irritated him. At the close of the first year he wrote there was a "Whole community ---- filled up

³² William Henry Venable, The Beginnings of Literary Culture in the Ohio Valley, Cincinnati, 1891, p. 225.

³³ Thomas MacBride, "The College of the Pioneers," The Palimpsest, vol. 16, 1935, p. 177.

with families who are Universalists or ignorant persons [and] who have never been brought up to respect the Sabbath or attend public worship."³⁴

When he was in Maquoketa he was making calls and "met there a Mr. Livermore who lives in the first cabin north of Mr. Shaw's, an infidel though he only considers himself a Universalist."³⁵

"Also visited Mr. Estabrook, a mile and a half northeast of Mr. F., Mr. and Mrs. E. were natives of New Hampshire but lived in Vermont. Mrs. E. brought up a Baptist. Mr. E. a Universalist; Restorationist; not well informed on religious subjects, a generally intelligent man." Later on he spoke of holding services at the Estabrook home and commented on Mr. E.'s theological beliefs, "Mr. E. supposes that all will be punished in another world more or less and all some time or other [be] made happy."³⁶

Near Charleston or what is now known as Sabula he "called on Mr. Westbrook [James, came to Iowa in 1839] . He [is] an Universalist --- an interesting family. The son, Royal, somewhat awakened. The family originally from N(ew) York, but raised mostly in the West."³⁷

"Mr. Dominic [James] candid, gentlemanly man, blacksmith, a little tinged with some notions of the Restorationists [a group of the Universalists who believed

³⁴ Philip D. Jordan, "William Salter's - My Ministry in Iowa," Annals of Iowa, (3) Vol. 24, Jan. 1943, p. 5.

³⁵ Ibid., p. 25.

³⁶ Ibid., p. 25.

³⁷ Ibid., p. 27.

in a temporary future punishment and a final restoration of all to the favor and presence of God.] "38

When visiting near Buckeye or Swaney Settlement he wrote, "Heard a report that there were some Presbyterian families in the settlement. Rode off two miles to their homes [and] found one a Universalist and another a Baptist."39 At Colony settlement on the boundary of Clayton and Delaware counties he met "Mr. Cole, Universalist preacher, impotent in his limbs, has settled in that neighborhood; proud and conceited man of considerable reading."

"Thus in all this journey of some 175 miles I passed but one meeting house and saw but one preacher [with exception of those in Dubuque] and that meeting house was a Romish one and that preacher a Universalist."40

"At Rome spent the night with Mr. Cleveland, a native of Eastern, Mass. - his parents are now living in Roxbury - a gentleman of information and travel. We found him busy with a law suit [he being Justice of the Peace] in which all the people seemed interested and which prevented our holding a meeting. Mr. C. has a good library. Unhappily, he is a Unitarian."41 That is the only mention he makes of meeting a Unitarian but apparently he met many Universalists, most of them were from the New England

38 Ibid., p. 52.

39 Ibid., pp. 52-53.

40 Ibid., p. 53.

41 Ibid., p. 72.

states and often he mentions that they were educated or intelligent people.

The pioneer adherents of this liberal sect were predominantly Easterners as Dr. Salter noted in the case of James Westbrook from New York, Mr. Estabrook originally from New Hampshire and later from Vermont. Judson Crary, Charles Tucker, Warren Worthington and Seymour Goodspeed emigrated from New York; R. W. Tirrill, Thomas Mitchell, and Mrs. Jason L. (Sarah) Estes came from New Hampshire; from the nearby state of Vermont came Mrs. Thomas (Elmira) Mitchell, Ira and Silenda Burbank; Mrs. R. W. Tirrill and W. B. Chamberlin grew up in Massachusetts, Kendall Young and L. F. Williard were natives of Maine; Emily Elizabeth Hawley and Henry Baker migrated from Michigan and others such as S. J. Oldfield, Jacob Loy, and Dr. and Mrs. Charles S. Clarke came on west from Ohio. A very few such as Father Schreiner were immigrants from abroad. (He was a Bavarian liberal refugee in 1833 because of his activities in behalf of Poland.)

In order to serve and organize the scattered religious communicants the itinerant pastor or circuit rider came into action. People were too sparsely scattered for them to support a resident pastor in each locality. Also as Dr. Salter noted, "The poverty of the people, [their] want of clothing and of teams and their small number [contribute to] the great difficulty in the way of

building a church here."⁴² They rode horseback or walked from place to place carrying a few scanty possessions and a Bible, and rehearsed their sermons on the way. Often they were the first to visit a frontiersman and his family in their rude log cabin with its clap-board roof, puncheon floor, and latch-string doors. He was usually simply clad, bronzed by wind and sun, intelligent and warm hearted. He was a prophet sent to look after his people.⁴³

"No matter what his faith, the pioneer preacher endured many hardships. 'It should be borne in mind that it required a ride of from two to three hundred miles each round, over a new country, destitute of roads, with the streams unbridged, to make all the appointments of a circuit. In that day all this labor was required, and in most cases actually performed on a paid salary of from one to two hundred dollars a year.'⁴⁴

"In all these farming counties the unwearied circuit rider of whatever faith, rode his familiar round; by every track, by every trail he passed, bearing his message of courage and cheer. You may see him yonder on his pony, outlined on the hilltop against the evening sky, as low descends the summer sun. From that hilltop the view is glorious, but [it] does not include the prospect of a hotel; and saddlebags for pillows, the traveler will spend the night alone beneath the stars!

"As days shorten and grow colder, the pony finds tether near some lonely cabin; its owner made welcome within. The neighbors gather. 'They round the ingle form a circle wide' and in the firelog's ruddy light they talk the evening hours away."⁴⁵

Although all sects had circuit riders they did

⁴² Ibid., p. 49.

⁴³ Skinner, op. cit., p. 243.

⁴⁴ William J. Peterson, "Religion and Morality," The Palimpsest, Vol. 19, 1938, p. 218.

⁴⁵ MacBride, op. cit., pp. 177-78.

not all use the same methods. The Methodist and Baptist ones held Camp meetings or protracted meetings, while the Universalists held public debates, where, as controversialists, they appealed to the reason rather than the emotions. Emotionalism "was particularly attractive and perhaps inevitable in an environment of sweeping distance, slight settlement, and crushing loneliness. From such conditions the camp meeting evolved spontaneously; providing means for human fellowship and emotional release."⁴⁶

Such meetings were usually held in a grove, where rude tents were put up in which the people slept. Bonfires were built to supply the light for the meetings which were held at night; and split logs were placed upon short posts for seats. The series of services lasted from two to six weeks⁴⁷ because it took a little while to get the emotions aroused. "The sermons proclaimed man a sinner and Christ a Saviour, calling all sinners to repent at once.... Heaven was presented as the sure inheritance and future home of the penitent believers while hell was declared to be the no less certain doom of those who neglected the Saviour."⁴⁸ Carl Ogburn gives this sample of one sermon he can recall:

"Unconverted men walk over the pit of hell on a rotten plank and there are innumerable places in this covering so weak that they will not bear their weight, and

⁴⁶ Thornton, op. cit., pp. 50 - 51.

⁴⁷ Skinner, op. cit., p. 244.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

these places are not seen..... Your wickedness makes you as it were heavy as lead. ... It will be dreadful to suffer this fierceness and wrath of Almighty God one moment; but you must suffer it to all eternity. If we knew that there was one person, and but one, in the whole congregation, that was to be the subject of this misery, what an awful sight it would be to think of. ... Instead of one, how many is it likely will remember this discourse in hell before the year is out."⁴⁹

They sang enthusiastically the good old songs that aroused an emotional, religious fervor. Following the singing and the sermon, the lay exhorters came to the front and pleaded with the sinners and back-sliders to repent. The purpose of the entire meeting was to alarm, dismay and terrify the people to bring about conviction.⁵⁰ While the exhorter was still speaking the congregation began singing an invitation song, [such as "Come to Jesus"] for the people to come to the altar or mourners' bench. They were largely children, young people and the perennial backsliders. Brethren and sisters prayed and talked to those seeking religion while the congregation continued to sing song after song.

"The 'Amen's' were ejaculated with unction. The petitioner was not allowed to make his requests alone but was numerously seconded by cries of 'Yes, Lord!' Occasionally something like a lugubrious groan was heard as if one were suffering from a severe pain, but no one was. It was simply a mighty religious fervor too great for speech, seeking expression."⁵¹

If there was a lull in the singing there would be loud

⁴⁹ Carl Ogburn, "Pioneer Religious Revival," Annals of Iowa (3) Vol. XV, 1925-27, p. 489.

⁵⁰ Ibid., p. 490.

⁵¹ George W. Clarke, "Bygone Days in Drakeville," Annals of Iowa (3) Vol. XIV, 1923-25, p. 344.

praying on the part of some layman.

"When one experienced the blessing he sought and felt peace spring up in his heart it was the signal for general rejoicing among all the Christian people. The temperament of each convert determined the way in which it would be made known to others that he had experienced religion. A sweet smile overspread the face of one, another's lips would move in half-suppressed utterances of gratitude and love; others would exultingly exclaim 'Glory glory, I have found the Savior and my sins are all forgiven'; Still another would spring to his feet and go here and there leaping and praising God, and shouting at the top of his voice that he was gloriously saved 'through the blood of the Lamb.' Scores and hundreds of meetings were held in subsequent years." (1841)⁵²

"Invariably they were denominational, for in those days there was a religious intollerance so intense and sometimes so bitter and unreasonable that it cannot now be understood. Nothing expresses the situation at that time quite so well as to say, 'The Jews had no dealings with the Samaritans.'⁵³ And certainly the Orthodox waged continual and unrelenting warfare against the Universalists throughout the nineteenth century. It was a war of words, frequently bitter ones which occasionally resulted in flying fists. "Entrenched orthodoxy [regarded] religious liberals as heretic and renegade, condemned them for placing religion wholly upon an intellectual plane. They were accused of being unscriptural, unspiritual, non-Christian and as such were persecuted and anathematized."⁵⁴ The

⁵² Skinner, op. cit., p. 245.

⁵³ Ogburn, op. cit., p. 504.

⁵⁴ Mack. L. Townsend, "Liberal Religions in Iowa to 1890", (a thesis written to qualify for a Master of Arts Degree at the University of Iowa.)

Universalists were protesting vigorously against this excessively emotional type of religious appeal and expression. They were challenging men to be reasonable and rely on God's love and justice.

Side by side with the husking bee, the house raising, the barn warming and the wedding, the public religious debate ranked as a social gathering welcomed by the lonely Iowa settler. Crowds would gather from all the country side to be entertained, amused, thrilled and perchance convinced. The Universalist missionary was by necessity compelled to defend his doctrine on the basis of the Bible and its interpretation. He and his contemporaries knew and could quote Bible texts in proof of any doctrine held by them and in refutation of any challenge. Their primary appeal was invariable to reason, thereby hoping to convert the mind and will. Many such debates were held in the early days.

George W. Clarke describes one that took place in Drakeville.

"There were religious or perhaps rather partisan, controversies about biblical interpretation in those days, such as are heard no more. There were individual arguments and expoundings of the scriptures. The preacher set up an imaginary antagonist and proceeded to annihilate him. There was almost no such thing as open-mindedness in religious matters. Then there were public debates to which the partisans of each contender flocked in great numbers. It may be doubted whether such a debate could command a hearing now, or whether men could anywhere be found who would indulge in such. But Drakeville was not without them. One may be recalled. Each side sent for the strong man of its contention, Frank Evans, Methodist, then I think of Mt. Pleasant, and [Erasmus] Manford,

Universalist of Chicago. Evans was a small man physically, Manford a big one. They went at it for several days upon the proposition, differently stated, as to whether all men would be finally saved in Heaven, or whether multitudes of them would be ultimately lost, each relying upon the Bible for proof of his contention. Such debates and others on many doctrinal issues actually occurred. In this one I think the crowd must have been largely with Evans, for I don't think in that time I ever heard a prayer or even 'grace before meat' that did not end with 'and at last save us,' implying an almost universal belief in and fear of impending destruction."⁵⁵

Manford's account of the same debate reads:

"We recently had a discussion in Drakeville, Iowa, with Rev. F. Evans, of the Methodist church. It commenced April 1st, and continued six days. We found Mr. Evans to be a talented and gentlemanly man, and the discussion was conducted very pleasantly. There was not an unkind word uttered by either of the speakers during the protracted debate, and all who heard, seemed to partake of the good feelings of the disputants. Discussion often divides the people and stirs up angry strife; but this debate harmonized the hearers, and produced kindness and brotherly love. Large congregations listened to the discussion, and we know that much good was effected. Several persons, to our knowledge, were convinced of the truth of the Restitution."⁵⁶

Generally there was no decision by judges so each individual was free to decide which speaker won the argument and his reaction was generally determined by his theological training, beliefs, and prejudices. Even though one of the debaters was far more skillful than his adversary, most of the people were unchanged, they went their way shaking their heads and saying "but it isn't true". There was little open-mindedness. However, the Universalist message reached many liberal minded settlers and often

⁵⁵ Clarke, op. cit., p. 343-44.

⁵⁶ Manford's Monthly Magazine, (Chicago), May, 1867.

drew them into a society after such a debate.

From a Pioneer History of Davis County comes the following account of a debate in Bloomfield.

"Followers of this faith have been in this county from the start. The subject of Universal salvation has caused discussion with the other denominations from an early day. Public debates occurred frequently and caused considerable interest. The discussions were generally advertised and well attended. The Rev. Thomas Ballenger, later of Oskaloosa for years, seemed to represent the Universalist belief and was its ready champion. Along in the seventies a joint public debate was arranged between members of the Universalist faith and members of the Methodist church, to be held in the Methodist church building in Bloomfield, to continue for six days and each side to pick its own debater. The Methodists selected Rev. Mr. Hughey of Illinois and the Universalists, Rev. Mr. Hughes of the same state. Three moderators were chosen, supposed to be fair, imported and belonging to other denominations. Judge Traverse of Bloomfield was one of the three. The subjects to be debated were prepared in advance, the Universalists affirming the first three days, then an intervening Sunday, and the Methodists affirming the last three days. The house was crowded every session and the interest was intense. Ministers of both faiths from far and near came and it was called the 'Battle of the Giants.' The usual result followed, both parties claiming victory. Up to that time the Universalists had no church building in the county. Occasional preaching services were held, but no regular pastors were employed.

"Following this debate and largely as the result of it, a Society called the 'First Universalist Church of Bloomfield', was organized in 1872."⁵⁷

Three years later, from the second of February to the fifth, in the Universalist Chapel at Bloomfield,^A Rev. John Hughes of Table Grove, Illinois debated with Elder George T. Carpenter of the Church of Christ. The moderators were General J. B. Weaver, president, [later a candidate for

⁵⁷ Federated Women's Clubs of the County compiled A Pioneer History of Davis County, Bloomfield, 1924-27, p.224.

the presidency of the United States on the Greenback ticket in 1880 and on the Populist ticket in 1892.] Elder D. R. Duncan and ^{the} Rev. J. L. Shinn. The propositions were:

- "1. The Scriptures teach the final holiness and happiness of all mankind - Hughes affirms.
- "2. The Scriptures teach that those who die in willful disobedience to the gospel will suffer endless punishment - Carpenter affirms."⁵⁸

These above statements and the rules for the debate were signed by the contenders.

At the outset they were very courteous and tolerant of each other's point of view, each striving to prove his opponents' reasoning unsound. As the controversy waxed hotter they became sarcastic and less considerate. Carpenter retorted that Hughes will have a "grand reform school over there." There was much sparring and difference of interpretation of the same scriptural passages and the same learned authorities. The one interpreting the Bible to be a revelation of things to come and the other as literature, history, and counsel to the people of a bygone day.

Hughes expounded on his quotations and illustrated somewhat more frequently and graphically. He contended that the punishment both here and in the world to come was in just retribution for violations of God's laws and would not be endless because "God is love, infinite power, wisdom, [and] mercy"; that we are saved not by Christ's death but by his life, he did not save us from sin but rather taught

⁵⁸ George T. Carpenter, John Hughes, and E. H. Waring, Debate of the Destiny of the Wicked, St. Louis, 1888, p. 3.

us right living and that a righteous life and not death-bed repentance would save mankind from punishment.⁵⁹

Carpenter frequently reiterated that Hughes had failed. He refused to believe him an honest interpreter of any authority, but just a deluded man trying to delude others. Carpenter's most effective weapon was the appeal he made to the emotions; by saying there is no advantage in being a Universalist, if it is true that all men are to be saved, but there is great danger in being one if they are wrong.⁶⁰ In his conclusion he said,

"This earthly probation at most is short The future, ah! that illimitable, awfully, grand eternity, freighted with all its joys or miseries, is yet untried. I ask, then, will you risk your eternal destiny upon an uncertainty? .. Will you sport upon the brink of eternity during life, listening to the siren song, 'God is too good to cast you off forever'? At best my brother's theory is but an abstraction, a speculation that cannot possibly benefit you in time nor in eternity. Be careful that it does not lure you down to ruin. If you believe upon the Lord Jesus Christ, obey his gospel in its fulness, and live and die in his favor here, you know your future will be secure.

"A word to my courteous brother. Dare you presume to divert the minds of this dying, eternity-bound audience from these sober realities, by any subtlety of rhetoric or elocution? Ah! can you in view of your dread responsibility, as an influential teacher and leader of the people, continue to feed your friends on the opiates, - the lullabies 'All is well, God will save you' '.... Will you not join me in warning them to flee from the wrath to come?"⁶¹

Hughes was disgusted by the appeal his opponent

59

Ibid., pp. 6-440.

60

Ibid., pp. 6-440.

61

Ibid., pp. 441-42.

had made to him to recant, his own conclusion was an appeal to reason. He quoted the following scriptural passages,

"God is love! ... he is merciful and will not keep his anger forever.... He will not always chide! He will not cast off forever! He will not contend forever.... In conclusion, I will say that this doctrine of endless punishment is a monstrous superstition, ... appalling in all its features, a relic of barbarism, without one redeeming feature in all of its various forms. It is, happily, now, a 'dying belief', doomed soon to pass away, to exist only in the memory of those who will wonder at the possibility that human judgments could ever be so warped as to receive a doctrine as divine, so utterly repugnant to reason and the Bible.

"But turn, if you please and contemplate for a moment the beauty of the system of universal grace and salvation, with its better view of God the Father, of Jesus the Saviour, of man the redeemed - man with better hopes, brighter prospects and confident trust in God his Father and Friend, and a blessed immortality."⁶²

Erasmus Manford gives his account of another debate held with the Rev. J. Kelly at Bedford, Iowa in 1871. His opponent seemed to feel that it was his mission to nullify all the influence exerted by the Universalist preacher at all of his mission stops. He appears to have been a narrow, bigoted man who was no match for the skilled debater of some thirty years of constant experience, and felt he should use his personality and ability in another fashion to redeem himself and his cause.

"We see from a Bedford [Iowa] paper that Rev. J. Kelly is in trouble because of his defeat in debating with us in that place. He is trying to bolster up himself, his cause and his part of the discussion, in the paper. Surely, they all need aid for never was failure more

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Ibid., p. 460.

complete, -- his own friends being judges. In the paper referred to, he quotes from our books to make out contradiction, but as is his custom, he garbles the books and misrepresents us. By the way, this man Kelly went into that discussion with the view of putting us down. This was what he aimed at. All his preparations had that end in view. He cared for nothing else. But he was sorely disappointed. He fell himself and his cause fell with him. But the poor disappointed man was unwilling to submit to his fate, and so tried another method to redeem himself. He followed us like a defeated wolf to Glenwood, and as soon as we concluded our meeting, without permission, he jumped to his feet and spent an hour in slandering our faith. When he was through it was nearly midnight, and so we had no time to reply as he intended we should not. He had become disgusted with our replies to him and was determined to have no more of them. Being so successful in Glenwood in making a speech without our having a chance to reply he went two days after to Red Oak where we had an appointment, to do the same mean thing over, but saw he had not the ignorant and bigoted crowd to back him he had in Glenwood, and so kept quiet."⁶³

Not all the debates occurred as at first planned or as the challenge was first flung. ^{The} Rev. B. F. Snook, then of Marion, Iowa, reported that Parson Young, of the Disciples of Christ, proposed a debate on the following two propositions:

- "1. Does the Bible teach the final holiness and happiness of all mankind?
- "2. Does the Bible teach that any part of mankind will suffer endless misery?"

He made this offer before his congregation then in a few hours got "cold feet". He scrapped these and substituted two other proposals in their place, and "because we refused to accept his substitutes he raves like a blackguard, throws mud like an enraged bull, and roams about the country

⁶³ Manfords Magazine (Chicago and St. Louis), Sept. 1871.

bellowing we have 'backed out'."⁶⁴

Both factions in the religious controversy were zealously consecrated to their cause. The orthodox regarded it as a holy crusade against the unbeliever. The Universalists were just as unswervingly dedicated to their religious position. Although there was some emotional appeal in the religious debate the Universalists held firmly to their conviction that religion should appeal to the reason rather than be an emotional response to an illogical doctrine accepted on authority.

Of all the Universalist circuit riders and controversialists of the pioneering era, Erasmus Manford is the best known because he was not only a preacher but a writer and a publisher. For more than twenty-five years he toured the west on foot and in the saddle from Ohio over most of Indiana, Illinois, Missouri and southern Iowa. The Rev. Henry Gillespie said that fifty years ago he walked in Manford's footsteps across the southern part of the state.⁶⁵ Neither cold nor heat, rain nor snow, winter nor summer ever halted his wanderings. Wherever he was called or wherever there was an opportunity to serve, he went.

Erasmus Manford was a Danish immigrant, whose sailor father was lost at sea when he was seven. At sixteen

⁶⁴ Manford's Magazine (Chicago and St. Louis), Sept. 1871.

⁶⁵ Personal conversation with Henry L. Gillespie, retired minister residing in Manchester.

he was learning the shoemaker's trade and because he disliked it dreamed of being a merchant. A chance reading of The Boston Trumpet, a Universalist paper, published by Thomas Whittemore led him to investigate Universalism. After reading copiously he decided to be a minister. He studied under the Rev. J. C. Waldo at Lynn, Mass.; Dr. Sylvanus Cobb of Malden, Mass.; and the Rev. William S. Balch at Claremont, New Hampshire; and made contacts with many denominational leaders at the Trumpet office, including the two Ballous and the editor. When the Rev. Otis Skinner in Baltimore advertised for missionaries for Maryland, he answered the call but found it a very discouraging field for a young man. After working there for more than a year he received less than fifty dollars, and what depressed him more, found few sympathizers.⁶⁶ (He attests that it was the northeasterner who was the type of person that accepted Universalism because psychologically it was adapted to their personality and way of life.)

From that disheartening experience he wandered from Pennsylvania to Ohio, to New Orleans, to Texas, much of the way on foot and the rest of the time by boat. He thought of forsaking the ministry. Instead, he returned to Cincinnati where he began anew the missionary work (in the early 1830's) that was to absorb his entire life and the energies of his wife for the next twenty-five years.⁶⁷

⁶⁶ Erasmus Manford, Twenty-five Years in the West, Chicago, 1867, pp. 12-22.

⁶⁷ Ibid., p. 22.

They moved westward with the frontier.

The first reference to his activity was found in the Star in the West published by James A. Gurley in Cincinnati.

"We have received the first and second numbers of a small paper, in pamphlet form, published and edited by Br. E. Manford, at Lafayette, Ia. Br. Manford is a most excellent Br., of the right spirit -- zealous and persevering, will no doubt greatly promote the cause of Universalism by his publication, which goes out with the name of The Christian Teacher. It looks well, and reads well ... is published monthly, and at one dollar per year. We wish it, and the author, abundant prosperity and success. May it prove a Christian teacher indeed and in truth."⁶⁸

Beginning a newspaper would hardly be his first enterprise since he would need a public to subscribe to it. Doubtless he had a circuit of parishes that needed more inspiration than he alone could give, therefore he was editing a paper which would reach them while he was absent serving others. He says in 1846, "The good cause has suffered all over the west for want of competent ministers to supply the wants of the people."⁶⁹ Even early in 1841 James Gurley had written, "There is a great and increasing want of Universalist preachers in the western country.... We are almost tired of inviting eastern preachers here. They have such erroneous notions of the West and the people in it, that they dare not come."⁷⁰

Perhaps such notions did detain some back east.

⁶⁸ Star in the West, (Cincinnati), July 10, 1841.

⁶⁹ Manford, op. cit., p. 199.

⁷⁰ Star in the West, (Cincinnati), April 17, 1841.

where the salaries would be far better but there were those who answered the call and whose lives were physically as hard as were those of all the circuit riders; but also socially very difficult because "nearly all the orthodox world, so called, is arrayed in opposition to them; and nothing is too bad for the self righteous to say of them and their labors."⁷¹ At West Union they threatened to horsewhip the Rev. Mr. Manford out of town. He said, "I was regarded as an infidel, a wolf, a blasphemer, an emissary of Satan. Women crossed the street when they saw me coming, as if I was a walking pestilence." However, most of the people he met, knowing nothing of Universalism treated him kindly and listened respectfully to what he had to say.⁷² He further remarked that "our ministers who have always labored where our cause is well established, have no idea of the mean and contemptible opposition a laborer encounters in a new field, where hardly any one knows anything of our faith or its history."⁷³

Many of the early missionaries will remain unknown and unsung heroes. The Star mentions some who were active in 1841. The Rev. E. M. Pingree of Cincinnati made frequent trips out over the states of Ohio, Indiana, Illinois and even to eastern Iowa. The issue of June nineteenth shows that he preached three days at Patriot,

⁷¹ Ibid., Aug. 28, 1841.

⁷² Townsend, op. cit., p. 69.

⁷³ Ibid., p. 23.

Iowa, and the following Sunday at Rising Sun.⁷⁴ The Rev. Foster preached at Patriot the Sunday prior to November twentieth; The Rev. W. M. DeLong the Sabbath following and a week later at Rising Sun.⁷⁵ This must have been a part of a circuit, perhaps one that linked western Illinois and eastern Iowa. Three months later the Rev. DeLong preached regularly, twice a month at Rising Sun and had the "largest congregations in town".⁷⁶

They frequently drew new recruits from within and without the local Universalist societies in Iowa, such as M. L. Edwards of Patriot, who was first the agent for The Star in the West and later entered the ministry. "He has received a letter of fellowship from the Laughery Association, Ia. He is a gentleman of unblemished moral character, sound in doctrine, zealous in the cause, well educated, and will no doubt make a very successful preacher."⁷⁷ Edwards preached in Newton on a Wednesday, Goshen on Thursday, Edwardsville on Saturday and Sunday, and in Hillsborough on the first Sunday.⁷⁸

Another recruit, Benjamin Foster, had been preaching. He was "a young man of excellent moral character and good pulpit talents and [bade] fair to become a

⁷⁴ The Star in the West (Cincinnati), June 19, 1841.

⁷⁵ Ibid., Nov. 20, 1841.

⁷⁶ Ibid., Mar. 5, 1842.

⁷⁷ Ibid., June 12, 1841.

⁷⁸ Ibid., June 19, 1841.

bright and shining light in the religious horizon." He expected to settle at Lafayette, Ia.⁷⁹ (There were six Lafayettes in those days in the following counties: Allamakee, Keokuk, Linn, Polk, Louisa, and Marshall, which one it was is not known.)

The Rev. A. R. Gardner was preaching in Iowa in 1837 and twelve years later the Rev. T. Abbott was holding services in Tipton. During the 1840's the Rev. Mr. Gardner, the Rev. H. Cole and the Rev. T. Abbott were active here. In 1853 the Revs. T. Ballinger, T. A. Freeman, Joshua Hicks, Danial Rose and I. M. Westfall were serving in the Iowa field. Some others who traveled extensively and discoursed on this philosophy were the Revs. E. Darnielle, J. S. Dennis, T. C. Eaton, Joel Garretson, Philander Smith, Joy Bishop, W. W. Merritt, Alva Dinsmore, S. A. Kelsey, L. H. Keys, J. Stebbins, Fletcher Wilson, C. Woodhouse, T. Wilson, S. M. Brice, T. Elliot, William Pierce, W. F. Davis, W. C. Ayers, S. J. Clarkson, John Casady, William Brattain, T. J. Severs and W. C. Myers.⁸⁰

About 1850 Dr. Manford says he was introduced to J. P. Sanford "in Bentonsport, Iowa. The latter was then a Methodist minister, and asked many questions concerning the liberal faith. Six months afterward he commenced preaching".⁸¹ Governor Gue spoke later of his sermon in

⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁸⁰ Universalist Companion and Almanac, Boston, 1853 and 1863.

⁸¹ Manford, op. cit., p. 332.

the vicinity of the Governor's home.

"It was fourteen years ago last summer, on a Saturday afternoon that we accidentally met a light haired, rather roughly clad, good natured, milk looking young man, in a country store at Big Rock in Scott County. He inquired of us if there were any Universalists in that vicinity. We informed him there were a few. He said he was a minister of that denomination and would like to preach to them if they could be got together. Notice was circulated through the neighborhood, and on a Sunday a fair audience assembled at the little school house near Posten's Grove to hear the stranger. He preached an excellent sermon, made the acquaintance of many of the congregation, and was warmly invited to visit us again at some future day and then traveled on."

That had been the first Universalist sermon that Mr. Sanford ever preached.⁸² This account reveals how the congregation was assembled by the itinerant preacher for services and that there were Universalist ministers in the field. Some came from the east and some were drawn from the west, but the supply did not meet the demands and needs of the scattered liberal settlers.

In 1846 Dr. Manford writes, "From Macomb I proceeded to Burlington, Iowa and thence to Iowa City. Here I lectured several times. I. M. Westfall was residing and preaching there. It was then a small town, but now it is a large and flourishing place. Our society owns a meeting house and other valuable property."⁸³ He did not mention stopping at Burlington where that same year Albert Shackford wrote to the Rev. William Salter on January third from

82

The New Covenant, March 4, 1871

83

Manford, op. cit., p. 227.

that city,

"A new establishment has been underway for some months denominated the 'Moral and Spiritual Reform Society' -- though passing current under the names of the 'India Rubber Church' and 'Free and Easy Church'. To this Society my brother preaches or lectures -- and it is made up of Unitarians, Universalists, Deists, Swedonborgians etc. It is now the popular church. Its lecturer is popular and their place of meeting the most comfortable and convenient in town. The class of men which it is most desirable to reach with the preaching of the pure Gospel, are the leading men among these Spirituals."⁸⁴

Dr. Wm. Chamberlin was a Universalist in that city and later was identified with the society in Mt. Pleasant.

Mr. Manford

"lectured in West Liberty, Tipton, Rochester, Muscatine, Washington, Davenport, and some other places in Iowa, and then returned to Indianapolis by the most direct route. This was a long and laborious journey; traveled about one thousand miles, and delivered many discourses, one third of which were in places where the people were entirely ignorant of our faith and in the rest they knew very little concerning it."⁸⁵

A year later he made a record of a debate which is noteworthy because of the place where it was held and those who were present. Although it took place in Springfield, Illinois, it was typical of those held in Iowa and we have his own description of it.

"I found that the preacher who had agreed to debate with me was not inclined to keep his promise and Mr. Lewis, the most noted controversialist in that section, was chosen to take his place. He was a Methodist minister of much ability and very zealous in his cause ----- We debated four days in the Representative Hall of the Capitol, in the presence

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Philip D. Jordan, "The Salter-Shackford Correspondence", Annals of Iowa, (3), XVIII, (1931-1933) p. 412.

⁸⁵

Manford, op. cit., p. 227.

of vast assemblies. The discussion produced much excitement in Springfield, and all parties attended it. I remember seeing Mr. Lincoln there punctually every day and every night. He often nodded his head to me when I made a strong point."⁸⁶

Dr. Manford moved to St. Louis where he published The Golden Era for a time, and organized circuits in southwestern Missouri, one with twenty-five points which he visited once each month and was compelled to ride from ten to forty miles a day in order to meet all the appointments on his schedule. In northern Missouri the circuit he rode included twenty-two places each of which he visited once in four weeks for six months. After selling the publishing enterprise he wrote, "But I did not cease working for the good cause when the paper was disposed of; I rather worked harder than ever. For about two years I was absent most of the time preaching in Missouri, Illinois, Iowa and Indiana."⁸⁷

The "winters of 1855 and '56 were about the coldest ever experienced in the West, and I spent both winters in Iowa, traveling and lecturing. Often rode on horseback all day when the thermometer was far below zero, and delivered a long discourse at night. The Iowa prairies are cold places in a cold day, especially to one whose face is northward from Missouri. If I had twenty, thirty or forty miles to ride, I always made it a rule not to go near a fire till I had finished my day's travel. Some men I have rode with must warm themselves by a fire, whenever they get a little cold, and swallow perhaps a dram of liquor; and I noticed that they always suffered much more from cold than I did. The best method for a traveler in an arctic day, to get up an internal heat, is not by whiskey, not by sitting

⁸⁶
Ibid., pp. 219-220.

⁸⁷
Ibid., p. 273.

by a fire a few moments, but by thrashing his arms, swinging his legs, or running a short distance by the side of his horse."⁸⁸

He established a new paper Manford's Monthly Magazine in 1857 in St. Louis. In its behalf he canvassed Indiana, Illinois, Iowa, and Missouri from 1857 to 1861. It was popular with the people and so it was not difficult to obtain subscribers. Because of the Civil War and the local frictions that it involved he moved from St. Louis to Chicago where he continued to publish the monthly magazine. "Since I have been in Chicago I have traveled and lectured on nearly all the railroads running out of the city; have labored not only in Illinois, but in Indiana, Ohio, Iowa, Missouri and Kansas."⁸⁹

It was not often that he expounded his theology in this account of his experiences. However at a meeting in Leavenworth, Kansas, as well as in the encounter with the questioner in Marshalltown he set forth his ideas.

He said,

"Salvation was not from hell, but from sin, from error, from mental darkness; that Jesus came not to save us from eternal burnings, but to make us good fathers, mothers, brothers, sisters, children, neighbors, friends, and citizens." The gospel is "good news from God to man, ... that all sin, suffering and death will be ultimately abolished, and that God will be all in all."

"Said a Man to me in Marshalltown: 'Do you think the assassin Booth can be saved?' if Orthodoxy is true, I had rather have Booth's chances for heaven than Mr. Lincoln's. The latter received his death

⁸⁸ Ibid., p. 275.

⁸⁹ Ibid., p. 320.

wound without a moment's warning and was not conscious an instant after the fatal bullet struck his head. He belonged to no church, was not a professor of religion, and so according to Orthodoxy, died impenitent, unregenerated, a sinner, and must be lost eternally. But Booth lived one or two hours after he was wounded, and was perfectly conscious to the last moment of his life. And who knows but that he repented of his great crime before he expired? And if he did, according to Orthodoxy, Mr. Lincoln had no chance whatever, for he died impenitent."⁹⁰

He was firm in his convictions but a sense of fair play, good taste and tolerance guided him in his dealings with others of different beliefs.

"I recently heard a discourse by one of our ministers, and he gave Orthodoxy an awful cudgeling. I do not like that kind of preaching. The Christian minister should preach the gospel in all its fulness -- present it in its doctrinal, moral, and spiritual aspect. But cutting, slashing, and banging, at this creed and that creed, at this sect and that sect, is not exactly preaching the gospel Telling people of the beauty and glory of truth and virtue, and urging a practical knowledge of the same, is far better than to be fighting Orthodoxy."⁹¹

His was a positive personality for he believed in the constructive rather than the destructive approach and procedure.

In closing his personal account he wrote,

"I have innumerable reasons to be grateful to Almighty God, that I have lived so long, enjoyed almost uninterrupted good health, had so many friends, and been permitted to labor in the gospel ministry. Truly, the Lord has blessed me all the days of my life. I have ... had but two spells of sickness, and they were induced by hard labor in hot weather. Notwithstanding my extensive traveling, I have never met with the slightest accident and I have journeyed by sea and land, in sailing vessels and steamboats, on railroads and on horseback, in stages and in wagons

⁹⁰ Ibid., pp. 332-33.

⁹¹ Ibid., p. 353.

of all descriptions. Have traveled in dangerous localities by day and by night, but a penknife is the largest weapon I ever carried." -- One more personal remark -- "I never snuffed, chewed, or smoked tobacco; neither did I ever poison my body or my soul with a glass of liquor -- do not know whiskey from brandy, and do not covet the knowledge."⁹²

1867, the year when he published the book, Twenty-Five Years in the West, did not terminate his labors in the beloved cause. In Manford's Magazine in 1871 he is reported as having been again in the state. "We returned in due time from our pilgrimage to the land of Iowa. Were absent seventy days and delivered seventy-eight discourses. Our appointments were scattered over a large territory."⁹³ On the Wednesday following Oct. 20, 1883 he preached in the Universalist Church in Boone.⁹⁴

In 1870 the Rev. Joy Bishop wrote a letter to Peter Blake, a Universalist in Strawberry Point, which revealed that he had been one of the pioneer preachers in northeastern Iowa.

"Bedford, Iowa, March 1870

"Peter Blake

"Dear Bro. being here at Bedford, the County seat of Taylor County, where I preached last night and am to preach tonight and it being very cold out, and I haveing nothing to do but to think my mind has wandered away to Strawberry Point and stopped at your happy home to linger awhile with those I respect and love. I often think of you and the happy hours that I have

92

Ibid., p. 359.

93

Manford's Magazine, (Chicago & St. Louis), Sept. 1871.

94

Boone Standard, Oct. 20, 1883.

spent in your society. My heart grows warm as I think of it now. Oh how much of real happiness there is in true friendship, Christian sympathy and love.

"We are all well. My health never was better than it has been this winter and never have my prospects looked better. The passed week I have traveled near five hundred miles and preached seven sermons, visited some fifteen families and been two nights on the cars. Here at Bedford we have some excellent friends. I have preached to them a few times and am expecting to organize a society in two weeks and establish preaching one fourth of the time the coming season and it is a very promising place. There are two or three other places where I preach where they are talking of building churches this year with some chances of success. Never have my labours in the ministry met with better success than in the last few months, as it appears to me, though in a pecuniary point it has been like casting bread upon the waters which may return after many days. I have preached in fifteen counties and more than fifty places since I came to this part of the state and traveled a matter of thousands of miles and received but little pay in money, yet I feel well paid when I can see the good cause prosper where I go, feeling that God has called me to work for his cause in enlightening and making happy my fellow men and not to lay up money for others which may injure them when I am gone.

"We have been at work this winter in cutting wood and getting [it] on to the Rail Road, finish this week, get five hundred and ten dollars today for what we have on the track. A pretty good winter's job for the Boys, is it not? Am still in debt but the future has more promise and if we all have our health, and good luck, shall come out all right.

"I have just heard that Bro. Ordeon has left you. What is the matter do tell me, What will you do for a preacher and what are they doing at Elkader, Greeley and how getting along at Manchester. Write me a good long letter as I am anxious to hear all about the cause God bless you is the prayer of your humble Bro.

J. Bishop" 95

The Rev. T. C. Eaton resided for some time in central Iowa traveling to various mission points preaching and organizing societies. His activities as a circuit rider in 1865 and 1866 were revealed by the following which appeared originally in the Christian Repository:

"DesMoines, Iowa

"I have been in the state fourteen months; have preached in twelve counties have assisted in organizing five new societies and the Central Association, have traveled 9,000 miles - 3,000 on horseback, 2,000 in a buggy, and 4,000 by rail." ⁹⁶

The Universalist circuit rider was indeed a pioneer. His primary obligation was to interest thinking individuals in his theology and to make contact with the scattered communicants. He sowed much seed broadcast o'er the land and some did fall on stony ground, but other on rich soil where it has flourished continuously for nearly a century. His secondary task was so to organize those small groups in the communities he visited as to perpetuate the movement. The wise missionary set up a circuit, the appointments of which he kept, visiting each place regularly or securing some one else to lay that basic foundation. In the latter method there was a grave weakness, because there was no supervisor or closely-knit organization to regulate the activities of the secondary phase, and there were not enough ministers for the work. That was Manford's oft reiterated cry ... for his early

⁹⁶ Manford's Monthly Magazine (Chicago & St. Louis), Oct. 1866.

successes were diminished by neglect. And John Gurley felt there was a weakness in the frequent changes in the ministry when he wrote,

"Among the practices that have greatly tended to keep societies in a disorganized and constantly unsettled condition -- prevented a close union and cooperation between pastor and people; and have kept our preachers in poverty and debt, we must not omit noticing the frequent changes of pastors by societies, and the continual removals of our preachers from one section to another."⁹⁷

In the 1860's Manford was, on the whole, quite optimistic about the liberal movement in this part of the West. He pointed out that the easterner was the one most receptive to teaching because of his previous experience.

"There are far more of the liberal faith in the northern region than as far south as St. Louis. A large portion of the people are from the eastern states, and they brought with them rational views of the Bible and religion. We have meeting houses and societies all over this northern section, also ministers at work instructing the people and uniting and concentrating their efforts."⁹⁸

There were valiant men serving a number of societies and finding time to do missionary work in neighboring places. They were a "goodly company" but left no written records. Especially was this true if in the later years no liberal society survived to perpetuate their work. In some communities the moving spirit was a layman who desired to serve God and his fellowman by building a church, organizing a society, inviting and entertaining

⁹⁷ Star in the West, (Cincinnati), May 15, 1841.

⁹⁸ Manford, op. cit., p. 316.

the circuit rider until they were strong enough as a group to survive. Such individuals were more numerous than the ministers who served them or the movement would have vanished in pioneer days. Many meeting houses were built on the faith and hope that sustained Thomas Potter.

Chapter II

THE EARLY CHURCHES: 1843-1870

The presence of the Universalists on the Iowa frontier and the activity of the circuit riders was not sufficient to make a lasting impression upon the cultural life of Iowa. Church or society organizations unified the individuals and they were strengthened by the common bonds of fellowship and the inspiration of a common purpose. Local groups banded together, later they joined the district associations and in 1843 formed a state convention. Thus through organization they perpetuated their religious philosophy for a century, and modified the religious thought of their neighbors.

Patriot

One of the earliest records of a society and a church were at Patriot (Union County), Iowa from which M. L. Edwards wrote in June 1841, that they had a neat commodious house of worship, on which was inscribed "Our God is the God of Salvation". Most of the people in the community were Methodists, and Edwards recorded that the house and the inscription "have been an eye sore to these good people ever since they have been in existence. The Methodists have often boasted that they would convert the Universalists and get their church." They held a protracted meeting in the Universalist Church (because they had none of their own) which lasted five days. "I need

hardly say, the Patriot Universalist Society is yet in existence and yet in possession of its house of worship. During the ... meeting, the Methodists and Universalists treated each other with respect."¹

In the fall of that year the Rev. E. M. Pingree reported, "At Patriot I delivered three discourses to large congregations. Here is one of the best churches and societies in the country ... with no minister. But they earnestly desire one. ... But, alas! alas! 'the laborers are few'."²

Perryville

In October in Perryville, Iowa (Marion County) a church was dedicated, the dedicatory sermon was preached by the Rev. Mr. Babcock of New York. A series of meetings was planned and an invitation was published in the Star in the West to all "Brethren in the Ministry! Come over and help us!" E. Manford wrote, "The meeting house in Perryville is thirty feet in width, fifty in length, has a steeple, and is well finished. Our friends in P. have done well and their labors have been crowned by kind Heaven with great success. Six months since, the society there numbered fifteen members. Sixty now belong to it. Seventeen joined during the late meeting. Yes, seventeen. We had a revival of pure and undefiled religion. Showers of grace

¹ Star in the West (Cincinnati) June 5, 1841.

² Star in the West (Cincinnati) Nov. 13, 1841.

were copiously poured upon us from on high."³

Rising Sun

The same fall they were erecting a house of worship at Rising Sun (either in Van Buren or Appanoose County) which "when finished will be the best in town." The Campbellites were fairly tolerant but the Presbyterians were very intolerant toward the group. The Methodists refused the use of their building when the Laughery Association held a meeting there that year.⁴ They, too, were unsympathetic with the new sect.

Iowa City

The group of liberals in the region of Iowa City, the territorial capitol, organized the first society, which endured long enough to be remembered by the older generation in the state today. It was so advantageously located as to exert considerable influence on the rest of the territory and later, on the state.

The Rev. A. R. Gardner moved to this locality from Henderson, Illinois, in 1837 or 1838. Before 1840 religious services were held in the log cabins of the settlers. In that year Judge Coleman used his influence to secure the use of the Representative Hall in the temporary State House in Iowa City. He also granted the use of it to the Universalists upon the request of the Rev. A. R.

³ Star in the West, (Cincinnati), Oct. 23, 1841.

⁴ Ibid., Nov. 13, 1841.

Gardner. The other religious societies objected to having it opened to this group. The Judge, a fair minded American, refused to discriminate. Because of this opposition the Rev. Mr. Gardner's first service was well advertised and the hall held the largest audience yet to gather in Johnson County to hear a "preaching". Opposition continued from all the orthodox Protestant Christians. The Presbyterian minister planned to extinguish all the candles at their next meeting.⁵ The Methodists refused to meet again in the hall after the Universalists had used it. Perhaps they thought that their salvation would be endangered if they worshiped within the same walls as "infidels and unbelievers". They held their services thereafter on a pile of lumber in the open air on their lot until winter came.

In 1839 the town plat had reserved eight quarter blocks for religious societies. The following year the territorial legislature provided "An act to grant certain lots of land in Iowa City for church and literary purposes." Any religious group was allowed an equal one half of any reserved one half block on the condition that they erect a building within three years.⁶ Between 1840 and 1843 seven of the quarter blocks were deeded, one to each of the following denominations; Baptist, Catholics, Methodist, Episcopal, Methodist Protestant, Presbyterian and

⁵
(no author) History of Johnson County, Iowa City, (1883), pp. 433-34.

⁶
Benjamin F. Shambaugh, Iowa City a Contribution to the Early History of Iowa, Iowa City, 1893, pp. 89-90.

Universalist.⁷

Under Gardner's leadership those like-minded liberals organized the first Universalist church of Iowa City, Nov. 6, 1841, at the home of Edward Foster. They elected a Board of trustees with Edward Foster, president; Seth Baker, clerk; Daniel Hess, Treasurer. Seth Baker and Daniel Hess were each to serve a term of two years, Robert Walker and Benjamin Weiser a term of three years.⁸ (The Rev. Augusta Chapin listed the charter members as they appear in the appendix.)

About ten days later, Nov. 17, 1841, the Rev. A. R. Gardner appealed to John Gurley, the editor of the Star in the West for financial aid in the building of a church. They must erect one by July 31, 1843 or they would lose their title to the half acre of land on the corner of Iowa and Dubuque streets. The Presbyterians had sued for the title to the same lots and having been defeated were appealing it to the Supreme Court. He had struggled against intense opposition for two years with not even ten dollars for the support of his family. Now that the lots were theirs and the society had thirty members they needed a church, and now was the time for the people back east to share in the missionary work on the

⁷ Mack L. Townsend, Liberal Religions in Iowa in 1890 (Thesis) p. 40.

⁸ Augusta J. Chapin, History of the Iowa City Church 1871 - (in her own handwriting, Iowa Historical Library, Iowa City).

frontier.⁹

Just below the Rev. Mr. Gardner's letter (which may be read in the appendix) Mr. Gurley wrote of him, "He is mild, benevolent, kind to everybody, yet zealous and persevering in the cause of Universalism. We believe no man can say any evil thing of him. He has spent his property, and sacrificed his health in preaching in different parts of the West. He has several times been brought to the borders of the grave by excessive labor and frequent exposure." And then in behalf of the society in Iowa City he made his own appeal:

"O brethren, then help, help them! Send them money, nails, shingles, or anything that can be used in the building. Do not delay. Enclose any sum of money you may feel able to give and direct it to A. R. Gardner, Iowa City, Iowa Territory. Brethren! What will you give?"¹⁰

A week later the Rev. Mr. Gardner wrote again concerning his charge in Iowa, "A bill has been introduced in our legislature with a design to prevent our friends from occupying a 'church reserve'. They failed in their object, although much to our delay and consequent damage. We now think we have succeeded in securing our lot." They were required to give a bond for one thousand dollars that a building valued at one thousand dollars would be

⁹ The Star in the West, (Cincinnati), Dec. 11, 1841

¹⁰ Ibid, Nov. 20, 1841.

erected within one year from the next July. "I executed that bond with the fond expectation of that help we confidently ask at your hands. Dear brethren, shall we be disappointed?" He added, "We have no place in which to hold public worship. Sectarianism with all its mad and baneful influence is showing its hydra head. We have been refused the occupancy of the only room we had to hold meetings in. We want a church where we can worship the God of our fathers without molestation."¹¹

On November 19, 1841, a few days after Mr. Gardner wrote to The Star the first time, Seth Baker, George T. Andrews, Rev. A. R. Gardner, Benjamin Weiser and C. S. Sangster were chosen to act as a building committee.¹² They purchased the "Ninety Dollar Temple", a frame house, of James Hanby and James Aiken. They paid for it by two notes each for forty-five dollars bearing interest at eight per cent.¹³ This would secure permanently for them the quarter block on the corner of Iowa Avenue and Dubuque Street.

When the Universalist minister was writing of the intolerance of the Orthodox denominations he was probably referring not only to the litigation but also to some of the events that Jesse K. Strawbridge, a leader of the new Methodist Protestant church choir, has related. In 1841,

¹¹ Ibid., Dec. 18, 1841.

¹² Capt. F. M. Irish, History of Johnson County, Annals of Iowa, VI, Oct., 1868, p. 303.

¹³ Mack L. Townsend, History of Liberal Religion in Iowa to 1890, (Master's thesis) p. 41.

the
 ^Rev. W. W. Woods, founder and minister of the New School Presbyterian Church, announced that on the following Sabbath day he would "Bury Universalism". Since they did not have a building, Mr. Gardner extended them an invitation to use the Universalist church and added that "inasmuch as we have to be buried, we prefer to be buried upon our own ground." They accepted the invitation and a large and interested audience assembled to hear the able discourse. After Mr. Gardner pronounced the benediction he announced that he would reply to the Rev. Mr. Wood at three that afternoon. He refuted every point and clearly stated the case for Universalism. Many were convinced and joined his flock, most notably the Methodist Protestant pastor, the Rev. John Libby. He served on the building committee and was interim pastor while Mr. Gardner was absent in the East soliciting funds for the new church.¹⁴ After having been absent a year on his quest, he returned in May, 1843, with contributions from twenty eastern and a few Ohio societies, amounting to fourteen hundred dollars in all. The most prominent contributing society named was the Orchard Street Church, New York City and the most famous individual contributors were P. T. Barnum and Horace Greeley.¹⁵

Work was begun on the church on May 22nd; the brick structure facing Dubuque Street progressed nicely.

¹⁴R. I. Preston, "The Universalist Church of Iowa City," Old and New, Des Moines, Vol XVI, Jan. 1908, pp. 3-7.

¹⁵Townsend, op. cit., p. 43.

On the front gable this legend was placed, "He that is our God is the God of Salvation." On the rear wall was another one placed rather high but clearly distinguishable "The Devil's Insurance Office." Facing this across the open ball ground was a single word inscription, "Hell", on the Methodist Protestant Church wall.¹⁶

The first state convention, with delegates from Dubuque and Muscatine Societies, met in the newly-finished church. It had cost about five thousand dollars,¹⁷ and it was dedicated on December 24th to the "One true and living God".¹⁸ After successfully completing their church it would seem that they would now have a degree of security and could continue building constructively. However, the people faced many difficulties. One of the greatest problems was where to find a minister, then, how to pay him. They received subscriptions from the parishioners, rented the pews and collected ground rent on their one-fourth of a block on which other people had erected buildings for their private use. Mrs. Robbins owed \$80 in the early 1860's and was "unable to pay up the back ground rent on the lot upon which her house stands and wished the society to take the house."¹⁹ This the trustees proceeded to do. In 1868

¹⁶ Ibid., p. 44.

¹⁷ Chapin, op. cit.

¹⁸ Townsend, op. cit., p. 44.

¹⁹ First Universalist Church of Iowa City, Clerk's Record, Vol. 1, p. 40.

the ground rent and interest on notes amounted to over \$1000.00.²⁰

In 1845 Mr. Gardner resigned, perhaps because of his continued ill-health. The trustees then offered to rent their building to ^{the} Rev. Mr. Woods and the Presbyterian congregation since they had none. ^{The} Rev. Mr. Bailey was offered \$100 to preach for one year. "In March, 1846, it was resolved that the Rev. Isaac Kelso be hired for six months for \$25.00 per month. In May, however, Mr. Kelso resigned and was paid the sum of \$118.00. On May 26, 1846, the Rev. Mr. Gaylord was hired to preach for one month and in June the record says, 'he was thanked for his services'." Mr. J. H. Fisher went to the Henderson River Convention in Illinois in search of a preacher. In June, "1846, Rev. I. M. Westfall came as minister and served the congregation until 1849."²¹ This was an eventful, picturesque and colorful pastorate. The Daily Press says his "Pastorate was characterized by an unvaried success and polemical triumphs in discussion with ministers of rival sects which brought his flock speedily into front rank and himself into the most proper prominence."²² The church membership increased, he was endeared to everyone and his memory lingered long amid that congregation. He was "bluff, outspoken but withal a warm hearted pioneer preacher." C. W.

²⁰ Ibid., 56.

²¹ Iowa Press, (Iowa City), Sept. 28, 1933 (J.A. Swisher)

²² Townsend, op. cit., p. 46.

Irish described him in his Pioneer Preachers of Iowa as "a scholar and first-class controversialist, abilities which gave him great power when debating differences of doctrine with ministers of other denominations, an undertaking he was often called upon to assume. His labors gave to his sect a rapid growth in the new West".²³ In 1848 a Rev. Mr. Davis, a brilliant scholar, came to Iowa City. He was personally very different from the Universalist pastor and criticised the latter for his lack of polish. He lectured in the Mechanics Academy to an elite few but was never invited to occupy the Universalist pulpit. Rev. Mr. Westfall resigned in 1849 and the Rev. D. P. Bunn came soon thereafter but remained less than a year. Following a brief pastorate by the Rev. H. S. Marble they were without a minister for some time. Mr. Marble was a great lover of children and did much to make the Sunday School prosper. He stressed its value in the building of a successful and prosperous church. The school had been organized by the Rev. Mr. Westfall, Dec. 6, 1846.²⁴ "In June, 1855, it was resolved that Rev. Mr. Peck be allowed five hundred dollars and house rent to preach 'Another year'. This indicates that he had served as minister for some time before this date, although the time of his coming does not appear."²⁵

²³ Townsend, op. cit., p. 46.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Iowa Press (Iowa City), Sept. 28, 1933.

Dr. Daniel P. Livermore of Chicago, then the editor of the weekly organ of Universalism in the Northwest, was called to this parish and the people were greatly disappointed when he did not accept. In May, 1858, the Rev. Eben Francis of Newark, N. J., was engaged as pastor at a salary of one thousand dollars, to be paid quarterly. He began his pastorate on July 11th. On December 7th, 1859, Mr. Millington appointed a committee to inform ^{the} Rev. Francis that "the society was unable to continue their contract with him and that he was at liberty to accept an invitation elsewhere whenever he chose, but while he was pleased to remain they would do the very best they could for him."²⁶ There is no record of when he moved away but ^{the} Rev. William Brattain was employed June first 1863 to preach for one half of the time for three hundred dollars. On November seventh the board annulled his contract and engaged him to preach full time for four hundred and fifty dollars. They also agreed to pay his daughter fifty dollars for playing the melodeon for the year.²⁷

the Rev. the

Both ^{the} A. C. Edmonds and ^{the} Rev. Mr. Dickson were there for a few services but either were not called or else refused the call extended to them.

"In January, 1866, Rev. Joseph Kinney was engaged as pastor at a salary of seven hundred dollars per year, with the understanding that 'should success

²⁶ The First Universalist Church of Iowa City, Iowa, Clerk's Record, Vol. 1, pp. 32-38.

²⁷ Ibid., p. 42.

attend our efforts we will during the year, give a donation party to Brother Kinney as an addition to his salary'. When Rev. Mr. Kinney had served as pastor for a little more than a year he became ill and on November second, 1867, tendered his resignation subject to acceptance by the board. Upon consideration of the question it was resolved that the pastor's salary be continued until the end of the year, and that the question of accepting his resignation be indefinitely postponed'. [The] Rev. [Mr.] Kinney was thus retained as minister until April 1868."²⁸

He had been quite successful in drawing people to the church for in 1866 there were twenty-six new members added.²⁹ His was a difficult task of drawing in the scattered members and organizing the church after a period of inactivity.

The business district had expanded around the location of the church and when a fire began there, it spread rapidly and the church was destroyed along with a number of other structures. November 7th, 1868 the church books show that "J. N. Seydell reported that he had sold the old walls, for the sum of fifty-five dollars and paid the amount over to the treasurer".³⁰ In 1868 they rented the Episcopalian Church on Dubuque Street, and the following year they used the Lutheran Church at Dubuque and Market Streets.

This was a crucial year for the Iowa City Society. It no longer had a church home and many of the

²⁸ Iowa Press, (Iowa City), Sept. 28, 1933.

²⁹ The First Universalist Church of Iowa City, Iowa, Clerk's Record, Vol. 1, p. 48.

³⁰ Ibid., Vol. 1, p. 55.

older people were passing on; only H. H. Winchester and J. Norwood Clark remained of the "old guard". Edward Foster who had served as the first president for seventeen successive terms had been succeeded by H. H. Winchester. Franklin Kimball passed on within two years, and "was mourned as no man has been mourned by the church not only, but by the whole community; which in him lost its most just citizen and the poor their best friend".³¹

In December the parish met for its annual meeting and "to take into consideration the feasibility of engaging a pastor and having stated preaching."³² "J. P. Irish moved that the trustees be instructed to confer with the Rev. Miss Chapin and if in their judgment it be deemed advisable, to engage her as pastor for the ensuing year." They met together and she accepted their offer for one year at a salary of fifteen hundred dollars. They must have been greatly impressed by her personality and abilities for that is far more than they ever offered anyone else and it would seem that they were in a poorer economic situation than for many years.

The year 1870 found Iowa City with a Universalist society still active. It had met many years of opposition from without together with the problems of finance and frequent changes in pastors. But the group had grown and

³¹

Daily Press, (Iowa City), Jan. 13, 1873.

³²

The First Universalist Church of Iowa City, Clerk's Record, Vol. 1, p. 59.

was facing squarely its new difficulties with determination and making progress.

Mt. Pleasant

"In 1847, I. M. Westfall, a Universalist preacher, came to this city and it is possible he preached the first Universalist sermon in Mt. Pleasant. The first sermon, however, of which we are historically certain was preached by the Rev. M. L. Edwards in the Cumberland Presbyterian Church on the corner of Main and Madison Streets, the site now occupied by the Public Library, and but 200 feet from the spot where this meeting is held,"³³ (and the site of the present building) on November 28, 1847. He preached in Henry and adjoining counties until the summer of 1851, and to him this church is indebted for its very existence and usefulness.

Mrs. Sarah L. Clarke who was living in Mount Pleasant wrote of I. M. Westfall in her diary,

"I was deeply impressed with a visit from him because he lost a horse which was a favorite with his wife and children. How could he go home to them without their pet? He could not restrain tears. Old Father (Edwards) who preached for us occasionally, said 'I am sorry for this brother, so much, how sorry are the rest of you?' Immediately a sufficient sum was raised to purchase a horse, and this act cemented the bond [of] friendship between minister and people."³⁴

"August 6, 1848, is the historic date of the organization of this society. On that day a 'meeting of persons favorable to the doctrine of universal salvation was held at the Court House in Mt. Pleasant'. Arnon Lapham was chosen chairman and C. S. Clarke clerk. On motion it was voted expedient to form a Universalist society in this place. A Preamble and Constitution were adopted and signed by the several

³³ Roger S. Galer, History of the First Universalist Church, Mt. Pleasant, Iowa, 1924, (Manuscript)

³⁴ James A. Throop, "History of the Universalist Church at Mt. Pleasant, 1898; p. 1, (Manuscript).

persons present, and the following were elected officers of the society; Reuben Allen, Arnon Lapham, John Craig, Trustees; Charles S. Clarke, Treasurer, M. L. Edwards, Clerk.

"The Preamble reads as follows:

"Whereas the preaching of the Gospel and the practice of the moral precepts of Jesus Christ are calculated to improve the condition and character of man and promote human happiness, therefore,

"We whose names are hereunto appended do hereby agree to associate ourselves together to be known as the 'First Universalist Society of Mt. Pleasant' and agree to be governed by the following Constitution.*

"This was a society, not a church proper, but afterward became such and was incorporated July 11, 1850".³⁵

In the years immediately following their organization they did not have regular services. In 1852 the Rev. W. E. Manly preached a series of discourses. Mrs. Sarah Clarke and her husband Dr. Charles Clarke emigrated to Iowa from Ohio, Aug. 8, 1842. They were Universalists and at first she especially missed her former church. She kept a diary and wrote in it at intervals for she was a busy person with a family and entertained any itinerant ministers of her faith that chanced to be passing through. Frequently she mentions her church in the entries. May 21, 1852; she says, "Brother Hicks influenced the establishment of family worship in many families in Mt. Pleasant, among them that of Dr. C." March 28, 1852, the journal read, "We had a second meeting today and organized a Bible class. It was, for a beginning,

35

Galer, *op. cit.*, p. 1.

* (Charter members are listed in the appendix)

quite interesting".

April 3, 1852, "We are getting up subscriptions to prepare T. Bereyman to become a minister. How I would like to furnish means to take him and William (Cole) through college". Then she expressed the thought that it would be best if they should earn their way. "They would prize it more." "However," she continued, "We intend to take money paid in- to our Dorcas Society" to purchase books for the boys. "This is to be done in the name of 'The Universalist Ladies Society of the Universalist church'" (Mr. Cole was in the first graduating class from the theological school at Lombard College.)

Dec. 11, 1853, the journal reads -- "I wrote to Brother Chapin to ask his assistance in building a church here. Mrs. Edwards is writing to Brother Gurley for the same purpose and Mary Corbin intends to write Biddlecome. Heaven speed these letters on their mission. O, how I do want a church!"

Jan. 15, 1854, "No answer to our letters. I got the family all off to church today. It is so much better to have children acquire habits while young that they should retain in after life. Charles attended church twice last Sabbath." A busy doctor could not often go to church.

March 16, 1854, the Journal continues, "I received a letter last night from Brother Thomas. He could not assist us in building a church. He advises us to assemble ourselves together every Sabbath morning and read a portion of the

scriptures and have read a printed sermon and thus enjoy ourselves as well or better than in a cathedral. Oh, that we could have a conference meeting, a prayer meeting of our own. How much spiritual happiness we would enjoy." March 21, 1854; "I have ever thought that there was too little spirituality in our denomination; that we are too much afraid of being like the orthodox and go to the opposite extreme. Would that we had a tenth of the zeal that the orthodox have." Perhaps she was becoming discouraged with those less zealous than she, who were members of the society.

On January 21, 1854, they had voted to buy a lot of John Craig on which to erect a church but she writes in her diary on April 11, 1854, "It appears that we are not going to get the lot of Craig for a church and if we do not I am afraid they will all get discouraged. I do not know where next to look for help. Perhaps we have looked too much to an earthly aid and have not trusted sufficiently to Him who is able to bestow upon us whatsoever things are for our good I hope the Lord will put it into the head of Brother Brown to visit us. I know that he would arouse us to double our diligence."

April 30, 1854; "A letter from Brother Brown last Monday. He thinks that he will come to make us a visit of two weeks. Some object to paying him because his stay will be too short. If he does come I trust no one will regret it. They cannot help liking him. The trouble is now whether we

will be able to procure a building to preach in. I have wanted [for] three years to get Charles' consent to write and now after hearing that he will come there are a great many objections. Mr. A. would not give anything until he sees him." Between the lines can be read the story of the work of the women in the Dorcas Society to keep this church alive and growing.

May 10, 1854; "I wrote to Brother Gaylord's wife in regard to our church. If we do not get assistance from Columbus I do not know but we shall have to give up and not try to build a church. I am more anxious than ever to have preaching since Brother Brown came, having discovered a number of persons who are almost of our faith. They would be quite if they could hear the truth for awhile."³⁶

"In the spring of 1855 the Rev. D. W. Morey commenced preaching and remained here until fall. During his stay the project of building was set on foot and before he left in the Fall the present building was enclosed."³⁷

"In January 7, 1854 at the annual meeting a committee consisting of Messers. Allen, Rodgers, Leedham and Clarke was appointed to report what steps were necessary to be taken to secure a suitable site for a meeting house.³⁸ They obtained a site and began the work in 1855 and finished it by 1857. It is the same building as the society was using

³⁶ Fred Clark, , Fairfield, Iowa, to Miss Grace Roberts, Nov. 28, 1938, (contained excerpts from his mother's diary.)

³⁷ Troop, op. cit., p. 1.

³⁸ Galer, op. cit., p.1.

in 1943.

"Harris Palmer and William Leedham were the contractors and Mr. Allsup worked with them. Henry Leedham made and put in the seats, and ten or fifteen years later made the inside blinds (shutters) a job creditable to him as a master workman, every part well done. Nelson Lathrop had the contract for the stone work, a man by the name of Gile, the brick work."³⁹

Mrs. Clark wrote June 16, 1898, that "We had a long hard struggle to get a church home. The ladies toiled, I had almost said day and night, but after the house was enclosed, they found it would be impossible to seat and furnish it, without aid from outside. We had refrained from begging, although we had aided others accordingly to our ability in previous years. We started a subscription, and the first one on my list was the whole-souled Hon. Jas. Harlan, for twenty-five dollars. Perhaps you can imagine how grateful we were, and I confess to shedding happy tears over it. It seems such a God-send. We could not boast of much friendship, from our orthodox friends. They seem to think it a religious duty to oppose us to the death. We had many heartaches over the unchristian treatment received. Thank God, the old bitterness is being overcome, and 'In His name His children are coming together more and more'".⁴⁰

³⁹ h
Troop, op. cit., p. 3.

⁴⁰
Ibid., p. 2.

Brother Craig of Oskaloosa in July of the same year, wrote, "We had hard times those days. We were starting a new thing and now doctrines are always unpopular, especially so when our eternal destinies are at stake, and that was the almost universal opinion then and to some extent is so yet."⁴¹ Leroy Palmer wrote to Miss Josephine Leedham,

"It was the evil spirit of this greatest exponent of Calvinism (Jonathan Edwards) against which our Universalist pioneers threw themselves with a fervor and conviction that had no parallel except, perhaps, in that which led to the abolition of human slavery. ----- Our little church was one of the pioneers in that great warfare of the intelligence and reason of man against the fast disappearing dogmas of medieval creeds.

"In these days of self indulgent ease, and ethical and religious complacency, timid, good people may say 'Why bring that up?' No one believes those monstrous dogmas today.' True enough, but this generation will never fully know or appreciate the transcendent moral courage of the pioneer -- evangel of religious liberalism until they recall the powers of darkness -- so to speak -- which confronted them."⁴²

While they were in the process of building the church, they had the pleasure of having the Rev. Mr. Morey return. Mrs. Clark wrote, Feb. 18, 1856 -- "I heard another good sermon from Rev. Morey. Our friends remained after the sermon to make arrangements for regular preaching. Mr. Howe offered his school house if no other place could be obtained, in which to hold meetings." - for the church was not yet finished.

⁴¹ Throop, op. cit., p. 4.

⁴² Leroy Palmer, Washington, D. C. to Miss Jo Leedham, Mt. Pleasant, Iowa - undated.

March 7, 1856, "Rev. Morey discoursed on conscience, would that I could at least portray the sublimity and beauty of his arguments in favor of Christianity as being preferable to infidelity and idolatry."

April 22, 1856, "We met at Shaws this afternoon to practice singing. How we want a good teacher of music!" Three days later they met again at her home to practice their singing.

Feb., 1857 she wrote,

"Many changes have taken place in this rapidly growing city. We have established an Industrial Circle in which we have made enough to purchase a good share of the furniture for our church and hope to be able to get the rest next season. I solicited help from others to purchase lumber for the seats and they are being made. They have engaged Brother Linell to come and preach for them commencing April first. Our church will be completed and a minister in it about the time we leave here so that we will not enjoy its privileges. This I regret more than anything else. Oh, the breaking of all the old associations and leaving all the old tried friends, and our home where we have been attached to every tree, shrub and flower and when, too, our church is ready to use and a minister to break the bread of life, which we so much need for ourselves and for our children. Pen cannot describe our feelings. Not even Charles has any idea how deeply I regret to leave the church. Shall we ever feel at home again and find such friends as we have left."⁴³

They were compelled to move to Fairfield to safeguard the doctor's health.

"On July 26, 1857 the church took action to invite the State Convention to meet here in September, on which occasion the house was to be dedicated. The committee was W. R. Cole, M. L. Edwards, Sumner Stebbins, Jonathan Perkins, and H. C. Leedham. It was ordered that Rev. O. A. Skinner of Chicago be invited to deliver the dedicatory sermon. The ladies were requested to appoint a committee to act

43

Clark, op. cit.

in conjunction with the above committee on arrangements."⁴⁴

In September, 1857, Mrs. Clark made this entry concerning the dedication,

"We have just been to Mt. Pleasant to attend the state Convention -- the first time I have been there since we left and a joyful season it was. The church was dedicated Saturday -- sermon by Brother Otis Skinner [the father of the famous actor of the same name] a sermon long to be remembered by all who heard it. We had excellent discourses from other ministers. Sunday afternoon communion services were administered. Brother Skinner officiating and truly brotherly love and Christian charity prevailed. This was the most interesting communion I ever attended.

"Sunday morning Br. Zornes was ordained. Surely every soul present felt the solemnity of the occasion. I could not wish to have a more comprehensive and solemn exhortation than Brother Skinner gave on the presentation of the scriptures nor a more heartfelt impressive welcome to the ministry than came from Brother Tomlinson when giving the right hand of fellowship. Oh, that we might enjoy more frequently such gatherings."⁴⁵

The Rev. W. B. Linnell became the first regular pastor in 1857 at an annual salary of six hundred dollars. He resigned October 31, 1858. He "was aggressive, argumentative. Like the pioneer Universalist preachers, he made sure his foundations, believing that to be the important work."⁴⁶ During the Rev. W. F. Brattain's pastorate which began in 1860, there were large accessions to membership, twenty on November fourth, 1861, and thirteen more on April

⁴⁴ Galer, op. cit., p. 1.

⁴⁵ Clarke, op. cit.

⁴⁶ The First Universalist Church of Mt. Pleasant, Iowa, Secretary's Record, Vol. 1, p. 38. (hereafter Mt. Pleasant Church Record)

9, 1862.⁴⁷ The Rev. E. Morris "was a young man, differing from the others in that his greatest effort was to establish and encourage the Sunday School and cultivate among his people the Christian life and character. The Sunday School under his ministration was the largest it has ever been in our history."⁴⁸ He was pastor from 1865-¹⁴ 67 and was followed by the Rev. Augusta Chapin, who served very successfully during one year. More than thirty were admitted to membership and great was their loss when she accepted a position in Milwaukee at a much larger salary. "It was a great disappointment to us all, especially to Dr. Chamberlin, who joined the church under her ministrations, and who saw in her success in the ministry a new opening for woman's work in the churches."⁴⁹

"Rev. J. W. Chaffin came to us a new convert from the Methodist Church in May, 1869. He held firmly to the cardinal principles of our church, yet preached with zeal and earnestness the supreme importance of cultivating the faith in the things not seen, which are eternal. Many liked his preaching, but when his year was out he resigned and went back to the Methodist Church. The church at the time of his ministry was the strongest in its history, paying him the largest salary ever paid before or since."⁵⁰

There were no extended periods when the church was pastorless but all of the ministers were there for

⁴⁷ Throop, op. cit., p. 12.

⁴⁸ Ibid., p. 12.

⁴⁹ Ibid., p. 12.

⁵⁰ Ibid., p. 13.

short periods except the Rev. Mr. Brattain who served four years. The largest salary paid to any minister was one thousand two hundred dollars to the Rev. J. W. Chaffin. Frequently they faced financial shortages. When the Rev. Mr. Linnell left in 1858 we find this record, "Resolved, that we deeply regret the necessity which compels the sundering of our present pastoral relations but deem it impossible under existing conditions to raise a sum sufficient for the support of a pastor, after the expiration of our present engagement."⁵¹ And again on June 9, 1864,

"Whereas this church by great exertions has just relieved itself from burdensome pecuniary obligations; whereas further considerable outlay of means is still necessary to repair and put into order our House of Worship, and defray incidental expenses; whereas in addition to other demands upon us it is our duty, during the terrible struggle for existence through which our nation is passing, to respond generously to the calls on us made in behalf of our struggling and suffering soldiers in field and camp, and their suffering families in our midst; whereas therefore we are unable, at present, with other pressing duties to employ and adequately compensate a minister of the gospel, and deem it unwise and improper to make engagements that we have not the ability to fulfil."⁵²

However, good fortune smiled upon this Universalist Church when Sister Lavinia Griffith, a generous member, gave the church a quarter section of land in Greene County, Iowa in 1865. It was sold and the proceeds enabled "the church to discharge all of its pecuniary obligations."⁵³

⁵¹ Mt. Pleasant Church Record, Vol. 1, op. cit., p. 27.

⁵² Ibid., Vol. 1, p. 49.

⁵³ Ibid., Vol. 1, p. 51.

They must have had difficulty in securing regular financial contributions from the members because on June 25, 1865, they passed this regulation, "All who thus contribute to the support of preaching [contribute regularly] shall be entitled to vote on all questions involving the choice or compensation of a pastor."⁵⁴ They considered at one time the feasibility of renting the pews but decided against it because it seemed to them undemocratic.

Services were continued under lay leadership whenever they were pastorless. In 1869 they thanked E. A. Van Cise and William R. Cole for their ministerial aid. "Sextons were appointed from the members who should take turns in caring for the church for two weeks each. Among these names we find M. L. Edwards, B. F. Pixley, J. A. Throop and William R. Cole."⁵⁵

"Those were primitive times and all kinds of economies had to be adopted. Times were hard from 1857 onward, wages were low, and there was no considerable surplus of wealth in the community. Ministers stayed but a short time in any one place. Frequent changes prevented any continuity of effort or policy. Several times the church voted to go without a minister until finances became more favorable, always with the firm resolution to maintain the Sunday School as the surest prophecy for the future."⁵⁶

"Just when a school was started in our church the records do not say but in 1859 at a church meeting the following resolution was adopted:

⁵⁴ Ibid., Vol. 1, p. 53.

⁵⁵ R. S. Galer, op. cit., p. 2.

⁵⁶ Ibid., p. 2.

'Whereas we are now destitute of a pastor,
 Resolved: that we will do all in our power indi-
 vidualy and collectively to sustain our Sabbath
 School'."57

In August, 1863, the record reveals, "The following
 Brothers and Sisters were appointed a committee to visit
 and counsel with such members of this church as habitually
 neglect attendance on its meetings for Public Worship and
 also to impress on the minds of parents the importance of
 having their children in regular and punctual attendance
 on our Sabbath School."58

Dr. William Chamberlin gave the church some
 books in 1848. In July, Brother John Craig was appointed
 librarian and Bros. Clarke, Craig and Pixley were chosen
 "to prepare and report regulations in regard to keeping
 and circulating said books."59 His journal of Aug. 17,
 1859 "tells of his visits in person and by letter solicit-
 ing material for the library.

"He says that some on whom he called were very
 agreeable, gave one or more volumes but others failed to
 understand the object and gave nothing. Enough were
 agreeable, for under the heading of donations we find they
 came from" all denominations and all parts of the east.60
 "It was a library based on broad culture rather than

57
 Laura Bowman Galer, History of the Mt. Pleasant
 Universalist Sunday School, (manuscript).

58
Mt. Pleasant Church Record, Vol. I, p. 44.

59
Ibid., Vol. 1, p. 10.

60
 Grace Roberts, History of the Universalist Library,
 (Manuscript).

narrow doctrinal teaching This library drew many book hungry young people to the Universalist doors."⁶¹

"In 1869 regular teachers meetings were held for study and improvement in teaching methods. This [was] a movement far beyond the general usage of that time."⁶² The record states that "to secure success a teacher needs to understand the lesson well and be in active sympathy with the pupils."⁶³ Rev. J. M. Chaffin and M. L. Edwards framed the Constitution and directed the weekly meetings. They had a staff of fifteen teachers so the school must have been quite large.

Dr. Chamberlin loved his church and gave generously to it from the time it was founded although he was living in Burlington most of the time. On December 23, 1868 he was thanked for an "elegant communion service, beautiful symbolic pictures" and "valuable books for our denominational library." His benevolences were of a greater scope than a mere denomination, as the article written by M. L. Edwards entitled "The Career of a Remarkable Man" would reveal. His "idea of genuine religion was, that it consists in doing good to others" an appropriate application of the Universalist principle "The brotherhood of man."

61

Laura Bowman Galer, op. cit.

62

Ibid.

63

Mt. Pleasant Universalist Sunday School Record, p. 10.

"He also brought with him to Iowa a number of Mexican land warrants. One of these he gave to the Mt. Pleasant Society, one to the society at Oskaloosa, and one or two each to other societies. The one he gave to the Mt. Pleasant society laid on land in the county, brought one thousand two hundred dollars, which went toward the church building. While living at Mt. Pleasant he was an active member of the school board and devoted considerable time to the interests of the school. He also, during the same period, gathered and set on foot, through solicitation and purchase, a public library of several hundred volumes. This library constituted the nucleus of what is now the Ladies Library of Mt. Pleasant which has become one of the established institutions of the city. While living in Burlington, in conjunction with Senator Grimes and others, he aided in the establishment of the Burlington City Library and took personal care of it for some two or three years. In 1855 he placed in the hands of the trustees of the Universalist Society at Mt. Pleasant the sum of one thousand dollars, to be invested and the interest to be used annually"⁶⁴

"in paying the clergyman who shall preach their Christmas sermon, the sum of ten dollars. The balance to be expended in such charitable ways as the trustees shall decide advisable in Henry County, Iowa, without respect to sect or denomination. July 22, 1874, nineteen years after the first donation, Dr. Chamberlin increased the sum so that with the addition of a few years' interest it became a principal of six thousand dollars. This sum was required to be placed at interest and one fourth of the annual revenue from the same was to be annually credited to the church expense fund as a compensation for the care of the same. Ninety dollars to be credited to the local relief fund, ten dollars for the Christmas sermon, and the balance of the said interest was required to be sent to relief committees of Universalist and Unitarian churches located in this and adjoining states,"⁶⁵ to be used solely for the relief of the needy, "whether saint or sinner, Universalist or Partialist."

"He also placed a like fund of one thousand dollars for like purposes with the trustees of the

64

M. L. Edwards, The Career of a Remarkable Man published Aug. 9, 1884, in a Mt. Pleasant newspaper (clipping was found among the Mt. Pleasant church records.)

65

Throop, op. cit., p. 6

Universalist Church at Galesburg ... [He] gave Lombard University, about 1856 or 1857, five thousand dollars, some valuable books to the library and some additions to the cabinet. He was made trustee in 1858, and served some years. In 1870 he added to his former gift certain bank stocks worth three thousand dollars."⁶⁶

There were many in this faithful group who were capable leaders, loyal and diligent workers. The personnel of those holding the offices varied frequently showing no shortage of able members. However, there was one man who was continuously in office, M. L. Edwards. He was clerk from 1848 until 1864 and thereafter he held a variety of positions on the Board. He was a man of a generous nature, with a firm undaunted faith, an integrity of thought and life, and a remarkable self-poise under the most trying circumstances. His contemporaries "never heard him speak evil of another but he extended to all the broadest charity, the most generous spirit. Every duty was well done, conscientiously observed."⁶⁷

"Theological discussions were quite common in those days and the Universalists must have been sharply divided among themselves, for on April 3, 1859 a resolution was introduced and adopted reciting that various views as to the authority of the Old and New Testament Scriptures were held and advising that no discussion on these subjects be held at the meetings and conferences of the society, but that full liberty of thought be granted and respected."⁶⁸

In 1867 William R. Cole, one of the charter members, withdrew from the society and became affiliated with the

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Edwards, op. cit.

⁶⁷

Ibid.

⁶⁸

Roger S. Galer, op. cit., p. 2.

Unitarians. This was not uncommon in many communities where there was a liberal group, they were a composite of varying degrees of liberalism. M. L. Edwards counseled them thus

"And whereas in all meetings for religious worship, and the cultivation and improvement of our religious natures, it is of paramount importance that a Christian spirit and harmony of feeling should be maintained; whereas, extended discussion on points of difference are apt to engender a controversial spirit and occasion personal reflection and unpleasant feeling, therefore let us resolve that in all our religious meetings and conferences it shall be our effort to keep alive and promote that fraternal spirit, without which all such meetings must be worse than useless. In giving utterance to what we think and feel, do it always with kindly deference for the views and feelings of others, and as an expression of our own conviction of truth and duty, rather than by way of controverting what may be advanced and held by others. --- Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like me, be strong. Let all that ye do be done in love'."69

Dubuque

The story of the church in Dubuque was written by Dr. Amos Crum, the pastor, when they commemorated the twenty-fifth anniversary of their organization. From this account of the History of the First Universalist Society, it appears that the delegates at the State Convention in Iowa City in 1843 did not represent an organized group but some adherents who lived in Dubuque and perhaps entertained itinerant ministers. The account of the anniversary appeared in the Dubuque Daily Herald, May 26, 1883. The Society being no longer extant, and the books among the

⁶⁹Throop, op. cit., pp. 15-16.

missing, the newspapers were the only source of information. Dr. Crum's account reveals much about their early problems and progress.

"Probably as early as the year 1837 there were among the population of Dubuque a few persons who avowed themselves believers in the doctrine of the ultimate redemption of the entire human family from sin and their consequent elevation to a state of endless felicity. Dr. Timothy Mason is authority for the statement that an attempt was made to form a society of such believers, but the circumstances being unfavorable it was abandoned. From time to time, as the town increased in population, the proposition to organize was repeatedly agitated, and it was as often determined that the proper season had not arrived for the inauguration of a society. The believers, however, embraced every opportunity for having occasional preaching by ministers of the faith who chanced to pass this way. Many, likewise, were subscribers for some denominational papers -- especially for the Better Covenant the parent and precursor of the excellent organ which now [bears the] ... title of the Star and Covenant.

"In the fall of 1857 [the] Revs. [Mr.] Tomlinson, [Mr.] Slade and [Mr.] Mason preached in Dubuque, and although the notices were usually short the attendance was gratifying to all and the contributions were characteristically liberal. In the month of January 1858, Mr. Able had an interview with Timothy Mason in which he proposed the establishment of a Unitarian society, and inquired whether Mr. Mason would support [it] . The latter very readily assented, expressing however, his preference for a society which should affirm Universalist sentiments. A revival of religion, such as were frequent in those days, commenced about that time, and Mr. Abel was converted, becoming a member of the Congregational Church, thus ending his interest in a distinct Unitarian movement. However in the opinion of many, the time had come for a liberal Christian organization in Dubuque....

"The following card became the initial step toward the later movement, and deserves to be preserved in the records of the church for the years to come. It was circulated on printed slips and read as follows:

'Dubuque, 19th March, 1858

'Dear Sir---

'A meeting of those who are interested in the establishment of a church of liberal Christians in this city will be held on Monday evening next, March 22 at 7 P. M. in the large room over Couch and Gilbert's.

'It is deemed that the present time particularly calls for this action on the part of those who are anxious to see opened a place of worship in which they can hear sound and rational theology separated from dogmas, to which they cannot listen with any pleasure or profit to themselves. We are sure there are a sufficient number in Dubuque favorable to this movement to insure its success and we hope to receive your hearty cooperation. We enclose a duplicate of this circular, which please use for the good of the cause, and we are, dear sir,

Yours obediently,

Wm. S. Couch

B.S. Downer'

"Mason's sketch says: 'The publication and circulation of this modest notice at the moment when a modern revival had been gotten up, caused something of a sensation in the religious community. Some received the announcement with a kind of holy horror, and attributed it to individual hostility to the revival. The more discerning saw in it the progress of liberal views and the advance of the age. There was much conjecture as to the design and object to be accomplished and besides unlimited private comment the matter was accorded the questionable kindness of public notice from one of the pulpits'."70

The meeting was held on the appointed evening, March 22, 1858, over Couch and Gilbert's Store, 110 Main Street, Dr. Timothy Mason was invited to preside and C. H. McArthur was elected secretary. Consideration was given to three names for the proposed organization,

⁷⁰Dubuque Daily Herald, May 26, 1883.

namely: The Society of Liberal Christians, The First Universalist Society of Dubuque, and The Society for Christian Progress. The latter, suggested by Mr. G. A. Blanchard, was accepted. Thirty-seven people left their names with the secretary signifying their desire to associate themselves with the society. (See the appendix for the names) Messrs. B. S. Downer, A. A. Edgerton, and E. Harwood were commissioned to draw up the rules for the government of the new group. A committee composed of Wm. S. Couch, L. D. Randall, and D. S. Cummings was appointed to procure a place for the meetings and to engage the services of a pastor or of temporary supplies for the pulpit. George L. Matthews and Arthur McArthur were charged with the responsibility of soliciting subscriptions in the interest of the society. On Sunday, April 4, 1858, the Rev. L. B. Mason of Chicago preached twice. The following evening they met to reconsider the name they had previously chosen. L. D. Randall moved that a two-thirds majority decide the question. The result was that twenty-three votes were cast for The First Universalist Society of Dubuque, fourteen were cast for The First Unitarian Society of Dubuque, and there were eight scattered ones. The title receiving the largest number of votes was unanimously accepted by the society. One thousand dollars was pledged to conduct religious services and they invited the Rev. Mr. Dennis to preach two Sundays in the near future.

"The Rev. Mr. Conant, a Unitarian clergyman, preached

twice on Sunday, April 11, 1858. [A week later] Timothy Mason preached in Odd Fellows Hall. April 25th and May 2nd, Rev. W. E. Manley preached in the new hall of the Globe building, and it is noted that good audiences were in attendance and that a choir was organized by Messrs. [B.S.] Downer and [Wm. S.] Couch.

" [The] Odd Fellows' Hall having been leased by other organizations, the committee on public worship rented [the] Globe Hall, on Main Street, for one year. An arrangement was made whereby the committee agreed to pay the expenses of [the] Rev. Mr. Dennis from Melrose, Mass., to Dubuque and return, and an additional sum of thirteen dollars per Sunday. The amount was raised by a pro rata assessment on the subscribers."⁷¹

On May 9th, 16th and 23rd Mr. Dennis preached in Dubuque. "Dr. Timothy Mason records of these three Sundays in May, 1858, that 'it rained almost constantly, but the congregations continued to increase until they almost filled the Globe Hall'." "On May 25th a meeting of the society was held whereat they decided to call the Rev. Mr. Dennis. He "returned to Melrose for his family. During his absence the Sabbath school and bible class were continued, and on two Sabbaths sermons were read to the congregation by laymen." He arrived in Dubuque to assume his responsibility as their pastor on July 1, 1858; and thus "began the first and longest and most successful pastorate the church has had."⁷²

From its very beginning the Dubuque Universalist Society had been interested in socials, picnics, excursions and countless occasionals. Many enterprises were

⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷² Ibid.

undertaken for the prosperity of the cause. One of them

"was conceived by six gentlemen in the society, J. K. Graves, R. E. Graves, L. D. Randall, D. K. Cornwell, Geo. L. Matthews, and J. H. Bartlett. They purchased a lot on the corner of Ninth and Main streets with a view of donating it to the society for church purposes. And zealous spirits may at one time have dreamed that a Universalist church would rise amid the city's din where Towle and Buxton's store now stands. But such was not the course of destiny that ultimately opened before the society, for, passing many pages of routine history in society affairs we find that on June 13, 1859 a meeting was held, Wm. S. Couch presiding, for the purpose of perfecting a legal organization of the society according to statute...

"Articles of association were ultimately drawn up and duly recorded and testified to by Julius K. Graves, said to have been duly qualified, commissioned, and sworn, in and for Dubuque County, state of Iowa, S. S., on the 14th day of July, 1860. The incorporators were L. D. Randall, J. H. Bartlett, W. E. Massey, A. Blossom, C. J. Cummings, A. Chamberlain, Timothy Mason, R. E. Graves, D. K. Cornwell, Geo. L. Matthews, W. S. Couch, and W. P. Allen. This instrument received the official witness and notarial seal of Wm. Hyde Clark, July 14, 1860, and was duly recorded....

"Under the dates of May 20 and May 31, 1862 are ample records of propositions, discussions and subscriptions for purchasing this church property entire from the Baptist society. And in the process of negotiations this First Universalist Society of Dubuque, Iowa, about June 10, 1862 acquired this property."⁷³

On March 16th, the following year, the Rev. Mr. Dennis tendered his resignation. He refused all inducements to remain and closed his pastorate six days later, after having successfully served this society for four years and ten months. He was succeeded by Rev. J. M.

⁷³ Ibid.

Hanson whose acceptance of the call was received December 6, 1865. Mr. Hanson's labors extended to 1868, the pulpit was supplied from July 1869, to June 27, 1870, by the following clergymen: The Revs. Mr. Hamilton, A. J. Chapin, J. J. Austin, George S. Weaver, J. G. Adams, J. E. Forrester, G. F. Flanders, J. W. Keyes, B. M. Tillotson, L. J. Fletcher, Sumner Ellis, D. M. Read, the Rev. J. S. Dennis, E. R. Sanborn, E. L. Conger, and W. T. Clark. The following clergymen were pastors of the church after the departure of the Rev. Mr. Dennis in 1863; Rev. D. M. Reed, 1863-1865, the Rev. J. W. Hanson, 1866-1869⁷⁴ and the Rev. Amos Crum, D. D.

The Sunday School was organized May 23, 1858. It became one of the strongest and most useful branches of the church.

"On Sunday July 4, 1858, a group of the church members organized themselves into a Society known as the 'Dubuque Universalist Sabbath School Association.' Its first officers were Dr. [Timothy] Mason, Pres., W. S. Couch, Vice Pres., C. H. McArthur, Sec'y. and L. D. Randall, Treas. The purpose was to perfect an organization of adults who would hold themselves in readiness to act in any capacity needed for the benefit of the Sunday School. It was their duty to see that the children of the church members were in Sunday School and to locate other children, who had no church home and to invite them to come. Considerable entertainment was arranged for, some on quite a large scale, such as the chartering of a boat at a cost of \$125.00 for a picnic; and Christmas entertainments in which the children were shown every consideration. The dues of this organization were one dollar for gentlemen and fifty cents for ladies. There are lengthy records on file that show this to have been a very active

and useful society.

"Its lists of charter members included such names as: Dr. Mason, C. H. McArthur, L. D. Randall, W. S. Couch, D. K. Comwell, J. S. Dennis, W. Longhurst, A. A. Edgerton, Mrs. S. P. Edgerton, C. J. Cummings, Mrs. F. C. Cummings, John C. Howell, Jerry Mahaney, C. H. Wright, Mrs. E. S. Wright, Marcia Longhurst, Orason Chamberlain, Mrs. Lucinda Chamberlain, Annie G. Lewis, S. M. Russell, D. S. Cummings, L. A. Cummings, Mr. and Mrs. G. L. Matthews, Jeannette Brown and M. A. Brown. There are records on file to December 20, 1871, showing that they met regularly during these years. The last report shows Miss Frances Cummings as Secretary and Treasurer, with H. M. Kingman as Superintendent of the Sunday School."⁷⁵

Tipton

The First Universalist Society of Tipton sent delegates to the convention in 1848 at Iowa City. In 1849 the Rev. T. Abbott was the minister preaching there. Six years later they entertained the state convention themselves. They were organized in 1859 under the leadership of the Rev. J. P. Sanford with fifteen members also a Sabbath School of about twenty children. "Meetings were held in the Old Court House, with occasional preaching by [the Rev.] Joy Bishop and [the Rev.] J. P. Sanford. Alonzo Shaw, Secretary."⁷⁶

Anamosa

The Anamosa Universalist Society was first reported in the Convention in 1849, just one year after the organization of the group in Mt. Pleasant. They either did

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ History of Cedar County, Iowa, Chicago, 1878, p. 473 and Iowa Universalist Convention, President's Notebook.

not own any property or else they never deeded it to the state organization because they have no record of its disposal after 1874 when they last sent delegates to the annual statewide gathering of Universalists.⁷⁷

Oskaloosa

The Oskaloosa Universalist Church with the six charter members, was organized in the Court House under the leadership of the Rev. Thomas Ballinger. Delegates were sent at once to the Iowa Universalist Convention in session at Maquoketa in 1850.⁷⁸ One of the land warrants Dr. W. B. Chamberlin of Burlington brought to Iowa in 1849 was presented to this church.⁷⁹ Brother Craig was one of the active laymen. In 1853 and 1861 while under the guidance of the Rev. Ballinger they entertained the State Convention. He was succeeded by the Revs. Joshua Spooner, W. F. Davis, A. J. Fishback and J. P. Sanford.⁸⁰

Des Moines

The Des Moines Society was first represented in the Convention in 1850 and received fellowship in 1867 and 1868. The Revs. W. W. King, T. C. Eaton and J. P. Sanford were connected with this group and used it as a center from which to radiate on missionary tours. The last delegate to attend the state session was there in 1894. The

⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁹ M. L. Edwards, op. cit.

⁸⁰ History of Mahaska County, Iowa, Chicago, 1878, p. 492.

Rev. N. E. Spicer once reported that they owned some property but S. J. Oldfield was unable to locate any of which there was ever a recorded title.⁸¹ The Rev. Erasmus Manford spoke often of preaching there and of the above named ministers who were serving the society. No doubt it was while the Rev. Mr. Sanford was with this group he was extended an invitation to address the Iowa Assembly.

Marion

The Universalist Society of Marion, Iowa, was formed about 1855 since that is the first year they had delegates at the State Convention which met at Tipton. In 1866 the Rev. T. Abbott held services there and in 1871 the Rev. B. F. Snook was the pastor. The following year they sent delegates for the last time to the Convention in Iowa City.⁸²

Manchester

Manchester was located further north and west than Dubuque, Iowa City or Mt. Pleasant. The county history reveals the early preaching of the Universalist faith, since the earliest church records have been lost. However, the brief glimpse of the society through this source and a few recollections of ^{the} Rev. H. L. F. Gillespie show some similarity in problems and development.

⁸¹ Iowa Universalist Convention, President's Notebook
(hereafter I. U. C., President's Notebook.)

⁸² Ibid.

"The first sermon in Manchester was delivered in the summer of 1859, in the second story of a brick building, on the corner of Butler and Franklin Streets, then known as 'Burrington's Hall', by Rev. Mr. Dennis, who was then living in Dubuque. Efforts were made at the time for continued services, but owing to the small number of resident Universalists, the efforts proved unsuccessful, and they had but occasional sermons until the winter of 1864."⁸³

The

^Rev. H. L. F. Gillespie's mother Emily Elizabeth Hawley kept house for her Uncle, Henry Baker^{was} a farmer in Coffin Grove Township and kept a tavern upon an old stage road. He was also the Justice of the Peace and among the very first settlers in Delaware County. Both he and his sister had been Universalists in Michigan. She kept a diary and in it was found the following: "Sunday, Oct. 27, 1861. Went to meeting this forenoon to listen to the preaching by Br. Bishop (Universalist). The text was the third chapter of Luke, 17th verse. Mr. Coffin came for us to go down there for dinner. We went. This afternoon we went to meeting again. Br. Bishop preached. His text was the 9th, 10th and 11th verses of the seventh chapter of Matthew. Ah! What gives greater happiness to one's soul than to hear the true teachings of Christ."⁸⁴

The Rev. Mr. Gillespie writes that "preaching was held regularly in the grove schoolhouses, one of which was a log building upon my Great Uncle Henry Baker's farm."⁸⁵

⁸³ History of Delaware County, Iowa; Chicago, 1878; p. 503.

⁸⁴ Henry L. F. Gillespie, Manchester, Iowa, to Elva Tucker, Sunday 25th, 1943.

⁸⁵ Ibid.

The Rev. Joy Bishop is next recorded in 1863 as preaching there.

In "the winter of 1864, when arrangements were made with Rev. Joy Bishop, known in Delaware County as 'Father Bishop', to preach every alternate Sabbath. These services were continued [in the Congregational Church] until the summer of 1865, ... the last meeting of the series being held in the open air directly in front of the church, because the key to the church could not be found.

"At this meeting, a few of the more zealous friends of the cause first originated the idea of building a Universalist Church in Manchester, but the idea was not carried into execution until several years later. The next regular preaching was commenced in the spring of 1868, in a room known as Belknap's Hall, by the Rev. Henry Jewell. A constitution, consisting of seven liberal articles for the government of the Society, was adopted at a meeting held in [this] Hall, June 20, 1868 to which fifty persons subscribed their names as members. The Rev. Henry Jewell continued preaching every Sabbath until September 28, 1869. On the thirtieth day of March, 1869, a meeting was held at Burnside's Hall, for the purpose of deciding the question ... [of] building a church edifice. A subscription paper was started, and three thousand dollars [was] pledged for that purpose; but it being the impression that a suitable edifice could not be built for less than five thousand dollars; H. M. Congar, E. R. Congar, Rev. Henry Jewell, Thomas Toogood, Gilbert Yeoman, A. M. Sherwood, Hiram Babcock, Jacob Hoag, T. Crosby, E. J. Congar, R. G. Clifford, J. Gilbert, and R. W. Tirrill pledged themselves to raise the subscription to five thousand dollars. Messrs. N. Denton, A. M. Sherwood, G. Yeoman, T. Crosby, R. W. Tirrill were appointed a building committee. The society was incorporated under the laws of the state, May 4, 1869; Clark Bliss, Sr., Thomas Toogood, H. M. Congar, A. M. Sherwood, E. M. Tomlinson, E. R. Congar, L. S. Bemis, and E. Hoag being the incorporators.

"The first officers under the incorporation were; E. M. Tomlinson, president; Clark Bliss, Sr. and James P. Robertson, Vice presidents; E. R. Congar, treasurer; R. W. Tirrill Secretary."

The church was "commenced May 10, 1869, completed May 7, 1871, at a total cost of eight thousand thirty dollars and forty-four cents. The dedicatory services were conducted by [the] Rev. J. W. Hanson, of Chicago. [The] Rev. E. R. Wood was the first regular pastor, commencing his ministrations in

September, 1871."⁸⁶

An article appeared in the New Covenant about this time that spoke of Iowa in general and Manchester's building problems in particular.

"The mass of the new settlers are young and friendly to our views. The new states differ from the old. In the old states people have wealth. In the new, the population is chiefly young, and for the most part unable, for a few years to do more than pay for homes and get started. They are willing but they have not the means. A Society of our views can be started better than any other, in many places, for the people are more inclined to us; but others came in with money and built churches, pastors are sent and partly paid, or the entire salary, by Eastern funds.

"We began a nice church at Manchester, Iowa,... the fall in the price of grain came on... collections were slow. I applied to the powers that be, to aid us... did not succeed; but some help was obtained... the brethren and friends are going on, the house will be dedicated ere long. Our people only need a little aid, in many places to give them success."⁸⁷

There was friction with the orthodox as the little incident of being locked out of the Congregational Church in 1865 would indicate. Furthermore the editor of the Manchester Press wrote April 8, 1943, "The Universalist church... was a flourishing institution." It was "looked upon by the other denominations in the town as a godless sect. That was because they didn't believe in hell or eternal punishment in a lake of brimstone and fire."⁸⁸

⁸⁶ History of Delaware County, Iowa, op. cit., p. 503.

⁸⁷ The New Covenant, (Chicago) Mar. 4, 1871.

⁸⁸ Manchester Press; April 8, 1943.

Clarinda

Down in the southwestern part of the state at Clarinda, a church was organized the year the first sermon (of which there is a record) was preached at Manchester. Although no mention is made of Erasmus Manford he was no doubt the first minister of this faith in that region. On January 28, 1859, the First Universalist Society of Clarinda was organized with twelve members. They were all members of the Loy and Pfander families related by marriage, except Dr. Albert Heald, who was spoken of as, "Always a close student of human nature, he was possessed of a mature judgment which was ever deferred to by his friends and neighbors. His was a nature so entirely free from prejudice that he could calmly view a matter from every standpoint, and form his conclusions accordingly."⁸⁹

In 1864 they built a frame church at a cost of six thousand dollars. ^{The} Rev. W. W. Merritt wrote that Job Loy secured the lots and did much in erecting the building. It was completed and dedicated in 1865 by Rev. T. C. Eaton and ^{the} Rev. W. W. Merritt. "Since the organization of the Society the congregation has enjoyed the pastorate of the following reverend gentlemen: T. C. Eaton, J. R. Baker, W. W. Merritt, James P. Sanford, A. Vedder, J. Bishop and occasional preaching by others."

^{The}
 ^ Rev. W. W. Merritt born in Rutland, Vermont, to

a home where "His mother was a Universalist, his father a Methodist, ... the children had many theological questions to settle, ... one brother became a Methodist minister" and he was ordained in the Universalist ministry in 1853 at Canton, New York.⁹⁰ He came west because of his health. "Like many other pioneers his early life was one of privation and hardship, his church the log-school house or more often some grove where the settlers would congregate."⁹¹ His daughter, Mrs. O. A. Milner can recall the Sunday School held in the woods on their farm in the summer and in the neighboring school house.⁹² He became the pastor for the church at Clarinda when he was the only minister in a radius of two hundred miles.

"He was efficient in a score of active vocations. In pulpit, schoolroom, office, farm, legislature, and lodge, he was a dominant figure. Courage and fortitude were linked in his life. Providence was kind to let him witness the fruits of his labor in the progress that took place all about him. He has left to us the heritage of a sterling manhood."⁹³

All over the southern, central and eastern sections of Iowa between 1837 and 1870, there were mission points that were organizing into societies or holding

⁹⁰ Universalist Year Book, Boston, 1923, p. 50.

⁹¹ Ibid., p. 50.

⁹² Mrs. O. A. Milner, Red Oak, Iowa to Elva Tucker, Cedar Falls, 1943.

⁹³ Universalist Leader, Boston, March 11, 1922.

intermittent services, when a minister from a nearby church came to serve them such as I. M. Westfall went from Iowa City to Mt. Pleasant; and the Rev. Mr. Dennis of Dubuque went west to Manchester; or an itinerant preacher rode through the section. Some of them had a short history, some have continued to the present and others were rekindled after being dormant for some time.

Cedar Rapids

"When in the early fifties, Cedar Rapids was but a sun-baked village by the Cedar River's smiling banks, a few stalwart pioneers, covenanted together for the purpose of giving testimony to the everlasting and ever-redeeming mercy of God. On every hand there lingered the dank aftermath of the Jonathan Edwards revival and its barbarous theology This little group received occasional encouragement from Mr. Livermore and his wife Mary. Misfortune, removal and death made serious inroads upon this courageous group, leaving only half a dozen to carry on the work in covenant together. Orthodoxy and respectability were gradually being made synonymous Then came the Civil War"

and apparently the society became dormant. Doubtless the last pastor in this early period was the Rev. L. H. Keyes, who was active there in 1863.⁹⁴

"In 1869, a small group of young men and young women having been drawn together by the urge of 'this new freedom' [born of the war period] met in Brown's Hotel located on Commercial Street [now South First Street], where they organized and incorporated the First Universalist Society of Cedar Rapids, Iowa. There were 23 charter members. [They] set themselves to the task of writing a constitution and by-laws to govern their society. Into this constitution they wrote their declaration of purpose, ... as follows:

"We, the undersigned, believing in upright life,

⁹⁴ Universalist Companion and Almanac, Boston, 1863.

pure character, and good works, and in the eternal worth and beauty of the moral and ethics exemplified by the life and works of Jesus of Nazareth, hereby associate ourselves with this church as members, thereof.' (see the appendix)

"During this time the young society had called as its minister, [the] Rev. W. C. Brooks. Through his efforts and the hearty cooperation of the members, a small budget was raised to enable them to conduct Sunday services in what was now called 'Universalist Hall' upstairs over fifteen Commercial Street."⁹⁵

Marshalltown

Just when the group in Marshalltown was organized is not known except that it was before 1867. Mrs. Nettie Sanford wrote an unusually interesting "History of Marshall County" in which appears the following::

"Claiming for their peculiar tenets the broad and liberal idea of the Fatherhood of God and brotherhood of man, and a practical Christianity, theirs is the oldest church in the city. They have no place of worship, excepting the town hall of Mr. Woodbury, but have purchased a lot and intend to build soon. Their minister, Rev. J. P. Sanford, who has just returned from a journey to the Holy Land, with sandals wet by the sacred waters of the Jordan, will be a power to help them in the erection of a suitable church edifice for the wants of a large and wealthy organization."⁹⁶

The Methodist church was organized sometime between 1851 and 1853 and Mrs. Sanford asserts the Universalist Society was the oldest and that it was organized by Father Dunton.⁹⁷

The organizers were Henry D. Hartwell, T. E. McCracken, J. H. Heighton, Wells S. Rice, J. D. McCord, J. A. Kelly, H.

⁹⁵

Rev. Waldamar W. Argow, An Historical Sketch of the Peoples Church, 1875.

⁹⁶

Mrs. Nettie Sanford, History of Marshall County, Clinton, 1867, p. 110.

⁹⁷

Ibid. , p. 110.

Willard, John W. Street. They appeared first at a convention in 1862. On September, 1866 they registered a title to a lot of land upon which to build their church.⁹⁸ In that year they gave socials, had picnics, sponsored lectures by the Rev. Mr. Sanford, and purchased a new Mason and Hamelin organ costing three hundred dollars, which was one of the best in the state.⁹⁹ In November the Rev. Mr. Chamberlin of Vinton (revealing an active society with a pastor) filled the pulpit very ably.¹⁰⁰ In 1867 they were meeting in Mr. Woodbury's Hall but in the next few years they also used Whitton Hall and the Old Stone Church.

The Rev. Mr. Sanford received thirty new members into the church in Feb. 1868. He "is establishing one of the largest and most popular organizations and congregations here that there is to be found in the state."¹⁰¹ In June there was a meeting and Sabbath School for the members, friends and children of the respective Universalist societies in Marshall County, in the grove between N. F. Messenger and A. Clemens in Marion township. A basket dinner followed the services.¹⁰² Apparently the Rev. Mr. Sanford was active in the whole county preaching to all the interested liberals and he was an able thinker and speaker.

⁹⁸Judge William Battin and F. A. Moscrip, Past and Present of Marshall County, Iowa, Indianapolis, 1912, VI; p.348.

⁹⁹Marshall County Advance, (Marshalltown), May 14, May 21, June 11, Aug. 20, 1867.

¹⁰⁰Ibid., Nov. 5, 1867.

¹⁰¹Ibid., Feb. 4, 1868.

¹⁰²Ibid., June 2, 1868.

Salem

Salem a small village in Henry County had a small Universalist society organized about 1854. "D. W. Henderson purchased a house in which the Society held meetings one year, when a windstorm demolished the building. This disaster seemed to throw a dampening spirit about the society, for since that time they have held no meetings."¹⁰³ It was probably not the "act of God" but their numerical weakness that prevented them from continuing.

Elkader

The Boardman Grove Universalist Church was organized in Elkader in 1855 with eighteen members. They first appeared in the convention in 1864. In 1870 they purchased the Congregational Church property for one thousand five hundred dollars. Their first pastor was the Rev. Philander Smith. Other ministers who served this parish were Joy Bishop, S. Wakefield, P. Hathaway, J. W. Hicks and Rev. Mr. Odeorn.¹⁰⁴

Bedford

"Some years ago there was an organization of Universalists at Bedford. The last services in the name of that denomination were held by Mattie Hulet Perry and Rev. J. E. Huston (about) 1877. Prior to this time the Universalists had services with considerable regularity. During a period of twenty years they had enjoyed the preaching of such profound orators and

¹⁰³ History of Henry County, Iowa, Chicago, 1879, p. 537.

¹⁰⁴ History of Clayton County, Iowa, Chicago, 1882, p. 646.

liberal thinkers as J. P. Sanford, and A. J. Fishback, who have reputations as wide as the nation; W. W. Merritt, afterward the Greeley candidate for Congress in this district; T. C. Eaton, J. R. Baker, and Joy Bishop. Along in the first years of the seventies they erected a church edifice which later became the property of the Presbyterians."¹⁰⁵

Bentonsport

Bentonsport, the town where E. Manford first met J. P. Sanford, was the site of a Universalist Society organized in 1858.¹⁰⁶ "Our people have a good church edifice in this place," wrote ^{the} Rev. Manford in May 1867. "Till recently, there was a heavy debt against it, but that is now paid, and the society owes nothing. No one is preaching there at present; but we hope our friends will awake, and soon secure the services of a faithful minister."¹⁰⁷

"The prime movers in this cause were Henry Clay Clinton, H. F. Greef, and William Quaintance. The pioneer pastor was ^{the} Rev. Mr. [T] Ballinger. The society continued but a few years, when it disbanded. Doubtless too small to maintain an active church organization."¹⁰⁸

Strawberry Point

The
 Rev. P. Smith, who led in the organization of a Universalist Church in Strawberry Point in 1858, was at that time pastor of the Boardman Grove church at Elkader.

¹⁰⁵ History of Taylor County, Iowa, Des Moines, 1881, p. 555.

¹⁰⁶ History of Van Buren County, Iowa, Chicago, 1878, p. 491.

¹⁰⁷ Manford's Magazine, (Chicago) May 1867.

¹⁰⁸ History of Van Buren County, Iowa, op. cit., p. 491.

On June 19th the organizers signed the constitution whose preamble read:

"We whose names are affixed to this instrument believing that it is our duty to make a Public Profession of our religious faith; and feeling sensible that our happiness and our growth in virtue and grace depend in a great degree under God upon our obedience to divine requisitions and upon an observance of the institutions of Christ, do hereby unite ourselves into a church that we may watch over each other in love"¹⁰⁹

There were fifteen charter members; J. C. Tremain and Joseph Hallowell were deacons; Chancy Bemis, treasurer; P. Blake, clerk. The first services were held at a log school house two miles northwest of Strawberry Point. The pastors have served as follows: P. Smith, two years; Joy Bishop, five years; Mr. [S.] Wakefield, one year; P. Hathaway, one year; Mr. [George] Odiorne, two years."¹¹⁰ There was no way of determining how long an interval there might have been between pastorates. A modest church home was erected in 1865.

Beginning in 1860 they sent delegates to the state convention; namely J. C. Tremain and A. Griffin. For more than a decade thereafter they sent delegates to the Turkey River Association which met in Dubuque, Greeley, Elkader, Manchester and Strawberry Point in the month of June.

In 1868 their delegates to the state meeting were commissioned to ask for full fellowship for this society.¹¹¹

¹⁰⁹ First Universalist Church of Strawberry Point, Iowa, Clerk's Record.

¹¹⁰ History of Clayton County, Iowa, Chicago, 1882, p.687.

¹¹¹ First Universalist Church of Strawberry Point, Iowa, Clerk's Record.

Mitchellville

The first religious society in the old post-village of Mitchell, was the Universalist one, "organized in 1860; [the] Rev. T. H. Darnelle was their first minister, preaching semi-monthly for a year. After the line of the railroad was changed, many of the houses in the town were removed to Mitchellville the town site was vacated several years ago (1880)." They first appeared in the convention in 1863.

"In 1868 the Universalists built the first meeting house on the northwest corner of Fourth and Market Streets at a cost of two thousand eight hundred dollars. It was dedicated the same year. The house is a frame one, thirty-two by fifty-five feet, all in one room, except a vestibule at the south and front end. It is a neat, comfortable building, painted white, surrounded by a large yard that is inclosed by a substantial board fence. [The] Rev. T. C. Eaton was the first pastor and stayed one year. He was followed for a year by Rev. W. W. King. The Rev. J. R. Sage immediately succeeded him, and continued to be pastor till 1877."¹¹²

Vinton

The First Universalist Church of Vinton first appeared in the Convention in 1864.¹¹³ It was incorporated in October, 1868. "Its object was to maintain the Christian religion as understood by the Universalist denomination." The first officers were: Moderator, W. R. Chamberlin, Secretary, B. F. Franks; Treasurer, J. H. Shutts; Stewards, J. A. Whitlock, H. Lathrop and B. Kendall; Trustees, J. A. McDaniel,

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I.U.C., President's Notebook.

S. R. Osgood, J. A. Whitlock, B. Kendall and J. H. Shutts. The Van Horns, the Lorees, the Hawkins, the Hewes, the Whites and Palmer Gay were also members. "Some were men of prominence and property ... It was never a large group. For a time they held services in the court room."

They bought a lot which later became a part of the Lincoln High School site. A house of worship was never erected although they had a capital stock of two thousand dollars which was divided into five dollar shares.

J. F. Traer, an attorney in Vinton, writes that he does not recall that the society was active after 1870.¹¹⁴ The last time delegates were sent to the state convention was in 1874.¹¹⁵

Cedar Falls

The First Universalist Society of Cedar Falls was organized before 1864 because they were first represented in the Convention that year and they were at the same time hosts to the annual gathering of Iowa Universalists.¹¹⁶ The Rev. Mr. Hines was the first pastor.¹¹⁷ In 1866, the Rev. Mr. Hamilton was serving Cedar Falls and doing mission work in Waterloo.¹¹⁸ The meetings were held in Phoenix Hall which

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J. F. Traer, attorney, Vinton, Iowa, to Elva Tucker, Waterloo, Iowa, Feb. 8, 1944.

115 I. U. C., President's Notebook.

116 I. U. C., President's Notebook.

117 Melendy, Peter, Historical Record of Cedar Falls, Cedar Falls, 1893, p. 39 and conversation with Mrs. F. D. Pierce, now residing in Cedar Falls, Iowa.

118 Waterloo Courier, Jan. 31, 1866.

still stands across Main Street from the Black Hawk Hotel.¹¹⁹

Eldora

In 1865 Br. T. C. Eaton organized a Society in Eldora of sixty-four members.¹²⁰ Two years later they were first mentioned in the convention. Steps were taken in 1867 toward erecting a new brick church which was completed and dedicated May 16, 1869. It stood near the northeast corner of the square. The society was incorporated in 1869 by Mr. A. Wiley McDonald, Mr. Jonathan Edgington, and Dr. King.¹²¹

Greeley

The Greeley Universalist Society was organized December 28, 1865 at the residence of J. Baker. C. S. Taylor was elected president; L. H. Keyes, clerk; J. S. Drybread, W. D. Jenkins, T. J. Armstrong, Lemuel Parker and Joseph Vaughn, trustees; M. Jenkins, collector. The society built a church the same year as Mitchellville did. C. S. Taylor was the contractor. It was also the year they were first reported as present at the State Convention of Universalists. The Rev. Joy Bishop was the first pastor.¹²²

Newton

The Newton Universalist "society was organized in

¹¹⁹ Conversation with Mrs. F. D. Pierce.

¹²⁰ Manford's Monthly Magazine, (Chicago) Oct. 1866

¹²¹ History of Hardin County, Iowa, Springfield, 1883, p. 626.

¹²² History of Delaware County, Iowa, Chicago, 1878, p. 531.

1865, with quite a small membership, but in the following year it had become strong enough to purchase a lot with an unfinished edifice upon it, for which one thousand dollars was paid. The building was completed in due time and at an added cost of two thousand dollars more. The building [was] situated at the corner of Olive and McDonald Streets. Up to 1876 the various ministers who preached for the church were [the] Rev. Edmonds, [the Rev.] J. B. Gilman, [the Rev.] Woodbury, [the Rev. C. P.] Nash and [the Rev. J. R.] Sage."¹²³

Waterloo

The Cedar Falls pastor, the Rev. R. G. Hamilton, held services in Russell's Hall and Lincoln Hall from 1866 - 1869 in Waterloo.¹²⁴ The Universalist society was organized in the latter place September, 1867 with a membership of thirty.¹²⁵ Some of the prominent men and families were A. T. Lane, H. W. Jenny, W. F. Brown, W. A. Cutler, J. C. Cropper, Wellington Russell, N. Doty, R. S. Leland, George Leland, G. W. Morgan. The Rev. Mr. Hamilton became their pastor, also, and was paid six hundred dollars for the additional charge. They were fellowshipped in 1868. It is evident that the society became inactive after 1870 because he left in October 1869 to go to Clinton.¹²⁶

¹²³

History of Jasper County, Iowa, Chicago, 1878, p. 466.

¹²⁴

Waterloo Courier, Jan. 31, April 11, May 23, 1866, May 30, 1867 - Nov. 7, 1867.

¹²⁵

Ibid., Jan. 16, 1868.

¹²⁶

History of Black Hawk County, Iowa, Chicago, 1915, p. 344. Waterloo Courier, Oct. 7, 1869.

H. B. Cropper wrote Mrs. C. N. Shane in 1939 after seeing an article in the Waterloo Courier, a reprint of seventy years before, recording that the Rev. R. G. Hamilton had decided to leave Waterloo; because it recalled to his mind a humorous situation that developed in 1869. He wrote,

"This Mr. Hamilton was considered quite a fine gentleman, good looking, and he and his wife were very popular. At the time he was the minister, service was held in the old Lincoln Hall on the West side ... of course in those days I didn't know a good sermon from a poor one but his congregation enjoyed the sermons he delivered very much.

"In those days there were two prominent ministers in the liberal church, one was Robert Collier and the other Robert J. Collier, one was a Universalist and the other a Unitarian. They were both noted for their good work throughout the eastern part of the country -- I think sermons of one or the other were published in book form.

"After Mr. Hamilton resigned and left Waterloo the organization wanted to keep going so one of their number a lawyer, Mr. H. P. Herring suggested that for a time he would be willing to read each Sunday one of the Collier sermons -- This is when the story comes in -- Mr. Herring started in and it didn't take long to find out that he was reading sermons that Hamilton had been delivering, and the more they looked into it the more they discovered that most of Hamilton's sermons were Collier's or some other preacher's. And maybe the Waterloo bunch were not pretty sore. To think that such a fine fellow as Hamilton should put over a thing like that. I don't think anything was heard of Hamilton after that.

"The Weatherwaxes, Lanes, Doties, Croppers, Wellington Russells, Allens, Herrings and others were hard workers in the church in those days and many good times were had. I have thought all the time that the Waterloo church was organized in 1869 but this clipping shows that it must have been active three years before that."¹²⁷

¹²⁷

H. B. Cropper, St. Petersburg, Fla., to Mrs. C. N. Shane, Waterloo, Iowa, Oct. 15, 1939.

Boone

According to the General Convention records the Rev. S. A. Kelsey was active in Boonesboro (which is now a part of Boone) in 1863. "On the evening of December tenth, 1867, a group met in Ives Hall for the purpose of organizing a Universalist Church in Boone, which place was then known as Montana, Iowa. Mr. A. B. Holcomb was elected president and Senator J. Orr was made secretary and treasurer."¹²⁸ They sent delegates to the convention which met that year at Newton.

Osage

"Early in the autumn of 1869, the Rev. N. P. Smith, of Maine came to Osage in the interests of liberal Christianity and calling together those families who were in sympathy with the broader faith which emphasized the 'fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man' began holding services in the Seminary Chapel once each Sunday. [The] Rev. [Mr.] Smith was soon engaged for one year and on December fourth, [some accounts give Sept. 1869] a meeting was called to complete the organization of the First Universalist Church of Osage. The trustees chosen were: Horatio Huntington, William Boulton, G. M. Stoughton, H. W. Van Sickle and Sidney Hastings. [There were 26 charter members] In May 1870 the first Sunday School was organized."

In 1866 Erasmus Manford was traveling in central Iowa and found that the spade work had been done, the seed was bearing fruit and he was no longer the sole contact the people had with a Universalist minister for they were organizing societies and engaging pastors.

"We recently spent three weeks in the interior of Iowa.

¹²⁸ Brief History of the First Universalist Church of Boone, Iowa and I. U. C., President's Notebook.

Preached in Lyons, Clarence, Marshalltown, Edenville, Clyde, Mitchellville, Newton, Kimball, Iowa City, West Liberty, Washington, Pleasant Valley. We made many new acquaintances, and had a pleasant visit. In Clarence, Br. Bishop is laboring with good success. In Marshalltown, Br. Eaton is hard at work building up a strong and influential society. Our friends there intend to build a church this season. In Clyde, Edenville, and Newton, Br. Edmonds is doing an excellent work for the good cause. We already have a church nearly finished in Newton. In Iowa City, Br. J. Kinney resides, and devotes all his time in the society in that place. It has had in days that are past, many ups and downs, and our friends there became much discouraged. But Br. Kinney by his judicious labors, in and out of the pulpit, is reviving the society, and our friends entertain strong hopes of again moving on prosperously. Br. Eaton also preaches monthly in Mitchellville. We have some excellent friends in and near this place."¹²⁹

A year later he remarked about the extensive work being done in the state. In much the same vein about similar localities, telling more about the ministers.

"I also spent three weeks in the north part of Iowa. Lectured in Lyons, Marshalltown, Newton, Iowa City, Washington and in many other places. T. C. Eaton who resides in Des Moines, has labored very successfully in the interior of that state. He has long been in the West ... has resided in Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, as well as in Iowa ... and wherever he has lived, has always been a faithful laborer in the Master's vineyard. J. P. Sanford is in Marshalltown, and is an eloquent speaker, and laborious worker. [Who as a Methodist minister, asked him questions at Bentonsport about Universalism]. Six months afterward he commenced preaching, and has been in the ministry ever since. He was in the army two years during the late rebellion, and was captain, colonel, chaplain. He has traveled some in Europe, and it is said, delivers some interesting lectures concerning 'the old country'. He is also a noted masonic lecturer."¹³⁰ [Governor Gue arranged for the use of the Hall of the House of Representatives at Des Moines

¹²⁹

Manford's Monthly Magazine, (Chicago) Aug. 1866.

¹³⁰

Erasmus Manford, Twenty years in the West, Chicago, 1867, p. 332.

for him to speak to the General Assembly.]¹³¹ In Newton met A. C. Edmonds, who resides and preaches in that place. He has spent several years in California and Oregon, traveling and preaching; has also published a denominational paper in those states. Our people have a meeting house, also a society in Newton. In Iowa City, the Universalists own a church edifice, and J. Kinney is pastor of the society. He is an excellent man, and the good cause prospers under his ministry."¹³²

The total number of societies, of which the state organization had a record, that were formed from 1840 to 1870, was seventy. In the first decade there were fourteen, in the second decade twenty, and ⁱⁿ the third one thirty-six, that appeared at the annual meeting of the state Convention. The tide was indeed rising. However, thirty-eight of those fellowshipped by the convention failed to survive until 1870 as active societies leaving a net gain of thirty-two.

Anamosa	1849-1874	Marion	1855-1872
Bedford	1870-1877	Mt. Pleasant	1848-1943
Belle Plaine	1867-1887	Marshalltown	1862-1900
(county history gives the date later)		Mitchellville	1863-1943
Boone	1867-1943	Newton	1867-1882
Buckingham	1861-1870	Nevada (could find no clew of this society, wonder if it wasn't just that Rev. W. P. Payne resided there)	1869-1892
Cedar Falls	1864-1896	Osage	1870-1940
Clarinda	1867-1900	Oskaloosa	1850-1882
Des Moines	1850-1894	Red Oak	1869-1897
Dubuque	1843-1896	Strawberry Point	1860-1909
Earlville	1869-1871	Tipton	1848-1871
Elkader	1864-1896	Vinton	1864-1874
Eldora	1866-1899	Viola	1867-1886
Greeley	1868-1907	Villisca	1869-1874
Iowa City	1843-1895	Waterloo	1867-1943
Jackson	1849-1879		
Knoxville	1867-1882		
Manchester	1867-1905		

¹³¹

The New Covenant, (Chicago) Mar. 4, 1871

¹³²

Manford, op. cit., p. 332.

The seemingly high rate of mortality need not be alarming because frequently one or two Universalists in a locality would attend the convention and to the later generations, reading the record, a delegate might appear to represent a society whereas in reality he did not, he represented that there were many thinly scattered liberals throughout the state. There were thirty that were reported for only one year. As heretofore noted the groups were nearly always small, many times numbering less than a dozen, and fortunate indeed was the community that had enough liberals living within its limits who could band together into a society numbering thirty or forty.¹³³

This Universalist denomination that originated in New England, spread to the Middle Atlantic states, and was brought westward by people migrating first to the North Central states and on across the Mississippi River. Those liberal-minded folk gathered first in homes to discuss religious ideas and creeds and as the itinerant minister passed through the region he gathered them in a grove, a school house, a court house, or a hall and preached his doctrine. The pioneer was more liberal and open minded than his eastern brother, partly because his very journey was a radical departure and also because the frontier tended to break down old traditions, habits and customs. Therefore Universalist societies sprang up like mushrooms over the Iowa

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I. U. C., President's Notebook (Compiled from the information found in Vol. I and II, of the Secretary's minutes.)

prairie. They had very similar problems; they were always few in number making it difficult to retain courage and enthusiasm and to meet the financial burdens of a church, hence the ministers' annual salaries were often five, six or seven hundred dollars; there was a shortage of ministers who had the missionary spirit, and the General Convention did not support them in a monetary way; they continually had to wage war with the intolerant orthodox denominations which regarded them as a "godless sect"; and within their own local society there was nearly always a composite group of liberals ranging from radical to conservative.

Each of the local churches drew up constitutions which were surprisingly similar considering the diverse nature of the movement. They generally made provision for a president or a moderator, a clerk or a secretary, a treasurer or a collector, and from three to five trustees. In Iowa City they had nine trustees elected by the parish and they chose the officers from that group. Note the preambles written by the churches at Mt. Pleasant, Cedar Rapids, and Manchester for their similarities.

Mt. Pleasant

"Whereas the preaching of the Gospel and the practice of the moral precepts of Jesus Christ are calculated to improve the condition and character of man and promote human happiness, therefore, We whose names are hereunto appended do hereby agree to be governed by the following!"¹³⁴

Cedar Rapids

"We, the undersigned, believing in upright life, pure

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Roger S. Galer, op. cit., p. 1.

character, and good works, and in the eternal worth and beauty of the moral and ethics exemplified by the life and works of Jesus of Nazareth, hereby associate ourselves with this church as members, thereof."¹³⁵

Manchester

"We covenant and promise that we will earnestly use the various aids to Christian culture and try to grow in the graces of the Christian life that we will faithfully walk with this church in love and the spirit of mutual help and that will prayerfully endeavor 'to adorn the doctrine of God, our Saviour, in all things' remembering that the one purpose of Christ is to make us like himself and that 'without holiness no man shall see the Lord'.¹³⁶

New members were admitted to the churches providing they would assent to the Winchester Profession and were voted upon favorably by a simple majority or a two-thirds vote of the church members. Iowa City required that they must have been an attendant at the church services or a contributor to the church for three months before being considered for membership.

In all of them any person could withdraw at any time he chose and receive a letter of withdrawal and commendation. Manchester provided that members were denied this privilege if there were any charges pending against them. Mt. Pleasant made a provision that they were disfellowshipped if they moved and made no arrangements about their membership.

The duty of the members was to help support the minister and the church; (in most churches there was no

¹³⁵ Argow, op. cit., p. 5.

¹³⁶ First Universal Church, Manchester, Iowa, Secretary's Record, Vol. 1, p. 3.

definite proviso but in Mt. Pleasant the members were directed to confer with the trustees at which time the amount of their contribution would be arranged.), to aid the sick, aged, widows, and orphans; to attend the funerals of the members and even defray the expenses thereof if necessary.

The ministers were chosen by the vote of the parish and they must have been fellowshipped with the General Convention. Note Article six in the Constitution at Osage, "No clergyman shall be called to, or continue in, the pastoral charge of this parish, unless he has the fellowship of the General Convention of Universalists."¹³⁷ A similiary clause was found in many of the constitutions. However some did not have this provision or else they altered them at a later date.

The section on Discipline was in tune with the eighteenth century and their New England background, although today it seems most unusual in a liberal church. Cedar Rapids devoted five sections to things that would occasion discipline among them, such as "the failure of any member to attend the service of public worship for a period of six months; anyone thus guilty after faithful admonition is to be suspended from the church."¹³⁸ Manchester had a similar clause and article six in the Mt. Pleasant constitution deals

¹³⁷ First Universalist Society, Osage, Iowa, Secretary's Record, Vol. 1, p. 4.

¹³⁸ Argow, op. cit., p. 5.

with the same theme. "Any member of this church who shall be guilty of profanity or intemperance, or any criminal offense against the laws of the land; or of a wilful violation or disregard of any rule or requirement of this constitution; or of any other unchristian conduct shall be tried therefor and on conviction may be reprimanded, suspended or expelled."¹³⁹ They required that complaints or grievances must be presented in writing, and an investigation made by the stewards, their recommendation was either accepted or rejected by the church members. They endeavored to effect a reconciliation if possible or a confession and repentance so that counsel, or a reprimand, would be all that was necessary.

Both the Manchester Confession of faith and the Mt. Pleasant Declaration were fine statements of the guiding principles of the Universalist churches and worth noting.

Manchester

Confession of Faith

"sec. 1. We believe that the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testament Contain a Revelation of the character of God and the duty, interest and final destination of mankind.

"sec. 2. We believe that there is one God, whose nature is Love, revealed in one Lord Jesus Christ, by one Holy Spirit of Grace, who will finally restore the whole family of mankind to holiness and happiness.

"sec. 3. We believe that holiness and true happiness are inseparable and that believers ought to be careful

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Mt. Pleasant Church, Secretary's Record, op. cit.,
Vol. 1, p. 189.

to maintain order and practice good works, for these things are good and profitable unto men.

"sec. 4. We claim the right to interpret the Scriptures in the fear of God and we accord to all others the same right. We therefore disavow all right to enforce our standard of faith on the conscience of others by pains and penalties, moral or physical."¹⁴⁰

Mt. Pleasant

Article 8.

"1. We believe in one Living and True God, whose nature is Love, who is revealed in Jesus Christ by the Holy Spirit of Grace and Truth.

"2. We believe in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament as containing a revelation of the character and will of God and the duty and interest, and destiny of man.

"3. We believe in the salvation of all Human Souls from the guilt and misery of sin, and in their immortal and holy and happy existence.

"4. We believe that holiness and true happiness are inseparably connected: that it is our duty to meet together for Public worship; to seek an advancement in knowledge and virtue by reading the Scriptures and attending to other means of grace: to abstain from vice of every description: to maintain order and practice good works; and to imitate as far as possible the perfection of God and the examples of our Saviour .. for these things are good and profitable unto men.

"5. We claim the right to interpret the scriptures in the fear of God, and according to the light he has given us: and we accord to all others the same right. We therefore disavow all right to enforce our standard of faith on the consciences of others by pains and penalties moral or spiritual.

"6. The objects of the formation of this church are the cultivation of 'faith, hope and charity' in our hearts; the diffusion of Gospel light and truth among our fellowmen: and the systematic appreciation of the fruits of Christian love and duty to all men and especially to the house of Faith."¹⁴¹

After drawing up their constitutions they chose

¹⁴⁰First Universalist Church, Manchester, Iowa, Secretary's Record, op. cit., Vol. 1, p. 1.

¹⁴¹Mt. Pleasant Church Clerk's Records, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 191.

permanent officers, made plans to build a church and to hire a regular pastor; organized a Sunday School, and the ladies banded themselves into a society such as the Dorcas or Industrial Society of Mt. Pleasant, to carry many of the parish burdens. All of their trials and tribulations were as nothing compared with the joy they shared in attending and belonging to a church that taught the Fatherhood of God, the brotherhood of man, the salvation of all souls, and the personal freedom to search for truth and to believe it wherever it might be found. (Note the diaries of Mrs. Sarah Clarke and Emily Elizabeth Hawley)

Very early the local societies although extremely independent in the management of their own affairs nevertheless felt the need of sectional and state organizations to give them unity, strength and inspiration. Therefore as early as 1841 there was in southeastern Iowa the Laughery Association which convened at Rising Sun, June fifth. The Rev. J. Hicks, A. Gazely and C. F. Coffin made the arrangements for the meeting. The moderator was Thomas Hewson and the clerk M. L. Edwards, Jr., who was given a letter of fellowship by the association. The societies represented were the Mt. Pleasant Universalist Society, The First Universalist Society of Ripley County and the Patriot Universalist Society. The minutes of the last meeting and the constitution were read, revealing that this was not their first meeting. Although there was no record of a state organization or of the convening of a state convention this meeting chose the following delegates for the state

conference: Jesse Marklin, Thomas Hewson, O'Neale, H. Foster, D. Nelson, Simon Dehart, Judson Buck, and John Mellen.

On Sunday the Rev. John Gurley preached a funeral sermon in reference to the death of Thomas Howard, Esquire, late of Randolph Township; "the concourse of the people was so great as to compel the meeting to adjourn to a neighboring grove. The becoming deportment, and serious and respectful attention manifested by the people generally, evinced the interest they felt in the doctrine of God's impartial grace. We trust much good seed was sown."¹⁴²

During the meeting a society was organized at Rising Sun, Dearborn County (there is no county in Iowa with that name today), Iowa. The same association met again in the same year the first Saturday and Sunday in October at Br. Wm. Watlington's, six miles north of Madison, Iowa.¹⁴³ In later years the Associations met annually.

In the Mt. Pleasant records there was mentioned the reorganization of the Des Moines Valley Association in that city Aug. 23, 1867, implying that there had previously been a similar organization. They designated the association area as "all of that part of Iowa south of the south line of Louisa County and the north line of Henry County, extended west to the Missouri River," but they did allow the formation of a separate association out of the

¹⁴² The Star in the West, (Chicago) June 19, 1841.

¹⁴³ Ibid., Aug. 28, 1841.

portion lying west of the west line of Marion and Appanoose County."

The purpose of this meeting seemed to be largely missionary. They also discussed the founding of "a school to which Liberal Christians could give their support" and Mount Pleasant was suggested as a good location; that was before the Methodists had located a college there.

The ministers present were the Revs. Augusta J. Chapin, C. L. Balch and Joel C. Garreston. The Executive Committee consisted of the above named officers as well as John Craig, A. Lapham and S. F. Harvey.¹⁴⁴

The Universalist Companion for 1853 does not record any associations. By 1863, there were three; namely the Turkey River, the Mississippi Valley and the Des Moines Valley.¹⁴⁵ Ten years later the number had been increased to five by the addition of the Central and Southern Associations.¹⁴⁶

These smaller group meetings were primarily missionary in purpose, they and the local churches needed a state organization to coordinate and direct their religious activities. The state convention was apparently not created until December 23, 1843 at Iowa City,¹⁴⁷ the day before the new church was dedicated; in spite of the

¹⁴⁴ Mt. Pleasant Church Record, Vol. I, p. 71 (A clipping was pasted on this page containing much of this information)

¹⁴⁵ Universalist Companion & Almanac, Boston, 1853.^{1863.}

¹⁴⁶ Ibid., 1873.

¹⁴⁷ Eddy, op. cit., p. 441.

suggestion that there were delegates chosen by the Laughery Association in 1841 for a state meeting. From all available records Universalists from Iowa City, Muscatine, and Dubuque were present. The latter did not yet have an organization. For one hundred years the State Convention met annually with the exception of 1918, during the first World War, when they agreed to donate the costs of such a gathering to the American Red Cross and the Y.M.C.A.

In 1853 there were twelve societies, one meeting house and five preachers. By 1863 the Universalist Companion and Almanac revealed a splendid expansion; there was a State Missionary Society, a State Educational Society, three Associations, thirty churches, six meeting houses, and twenty-seven preachers. During the 1860's they had an active Missionary Board. The first record shows the Rev. Alfred Peck of Le Claire, the missionary for the northern part of the state, and Rev. T. Ballinger for the southern portion. From 1862 - 1867 Rev. J. P. Sanford served the entire state and the Board that supported these activities was comprised of the President, Alden Fletcher; Secretary, D. Connell, Buckingham; Treasurer, J. N. Clark. To these men go much of the credit for the organization of a large number of societies. Unfortunately, however, many did not survive for more than two or three years. Perhaps it was because of inadequate numbers, a weak organization or insufficient supervision. Never again did the Universalists have as many ministers serving the

state as in 1863 nor as many societies as they had in 1873.¹⁴⁸

During the early years, the leadership for the state organization is unknown. Not until 1868 do we know the complete roster of officers. Prior to that only the clerk's name was included with the notices in the Universalist Companion and Almanac or Companion and Register. The Rev. Manning Hull, the Rev. Alfred Peck, and J. N. Clark each served a number of years.¹⁴⁹

The Secretarial Records of the state convention for the first fifty-one years were lost. Mrs. T. E. Dotter deposited volumes one and two in the Masonic Library in Cedar Rapids. Later when Herbert L. Stoughton became Secretary he deposited them for safe keeping with the Mitchell County Savings Bank in Osage, Iowa, and placed a notation in the current record to that effect. Unfortunately the bank closed within a few days of his death in 1923. When the newly appointed officer received the books and attempted to claim the old records they could not be located by the receiver of the bank.¹⁵⁰

Many of the details of the early history of the Universalist movement are forever cast into shadow by this loss of the official records. However, many of the societies have outlived the written page by fifty years and

¹⁴⁸ Universalist Companion and Almanac, Boston, 1863, and Companion and Register, Boston, 1873.

¹⁴⁹

Ibid.

¹⁵⁰ Personal Conversation with Rev. Jennie Bartholomew Hitchcock of Osage, Iowa and I. U. C. Secretary's Record, Vol. 3, p. 1.

continued to give testimony to their faith by words, deeds and the steadfast lives of their members who were so often valuable citizens in their local communities working to make their town, state, and nation a better place.

Chapter III

THE OLDER CHURCHES: 1870-1900

By 1870 Iowa was becoming less the vanguard on the American frontier and more a rural state with settled habitations, occupations and community life. Living in general was somewhat easier and life less crude and elemental. Many from the region had borne their part in the disastrous Civil War and had now returned to their homes. Yet for more than a decade the westward moving peoples passed through the state toward the setting sun. The eastern section of the state became a stable society much sooner than the northwestern part simply because it was the first in order of settlement. However in the last two decades of the century the whole of Iowa became an established social and economic community.

The Universalists of this period, in looking into the future, could see large possibilities for their faith. Transportation was greatly improved by the extending railway lines, the number of ministers had increased, more people were living in villages, and the last decade had witnessed a tremendous increase in the number of societies. Their optimism was revealed at the Knoxville Convention in 1881 when they wrote, "We have good reason to be encouraged. If we but use our opportunities and resources as we probably shall, great results in the establishment of our faith in

this grand state of the west shall be accomplished."¹

However, they could not know that the tide of expansion under the leadership of the State Missionary Board was nearing its peak. Many of the new groups were reported into the convention but once or twice about 1869, 1870 and 1871 and ceased to report again. Some of these were Clyde, Earlville, East Nordway, LaPorte, Moingona, Brandon, Wyoming, Fletchers Grove, LaMotte and Forrestville. Many others which were reported in the seventies were fellowshipped for only a year or two. Nevertheless, there was sufficient activity or representation to warrant the recognition of Agricola, Blairstown, Center Point, Chariton, Linnville, Logan, Osceola, Sac City, Searsboro, Victor, Wheatland, Harvey, Washington and Chelsea for a short time. In the eighties the total number recognized by the state convention dropped more than sixty per cent, and of that smaller group Dakota City, Stuart, Newell, Ossian and Hampton had a very short life span. During the nineties Pomeroy, Ft. Dodge, Oelwein, Belmond, Birmingham, Creston and Mt. Union were organized and disbanded within a few years.

During these three decades the pattern of organization and survival was:

1870's	--	35 formed	--	11 had more than 10 years of history
1880's	--	9 formed	--	3 had more than 10 years of history
1890's	--	11 formed	--	2 had more than 10 years of history

¹Minutes of the State Executive Board on file in the Church of the Redeemer, Waterloo, Iowa.

No new societies were begun in the state after 1900. The last one to survive more than a year was Northwood, which was organized in 1897. During this period there were fifty societies begun while only sixteen had more than ten years of existence. Of this sixteen only nine were active church parishes by 1900 (based on Iowa Convention Records). They were Osage, Iowa Falls, Bloomfield, Storm Lake, Webster City, Northwood, Shenandoah, Otranto, and West Union. Those organized in the state prior to 1870 and still active in their communities in 1900 were the churches at Mt. Pleasant, Cedar Rapids, Strawberry Point, Marshalltown, Mitchellville, Clarinda, Boone, Greeley, Manchester and Waterloo. The total number of active churches in 1900 was nineteen out of one hundred twenty-seven reported in the State Convention's Secretarial Records. The following table shows the mortality rate before 1900:

1870's	-----	33	societies
1880's	-----	13	"
1890's	-----	22	"
<hr/>			
1900 total		68	societies

The decade of the 1870's was the high point in the organization of groups and also highest in the loss thereof. The net gain in the period was two. The net losses for the three decades were:

1870's	-----	+2 societies
1880's	-----	-4 "
1890's	-----	-11 "
<hr/>		
1900 total		-13 societies ²

It was no wonder that in the late 1890's the state convention chose a very able minister, Dr. Amos Crum, to do missionary work in the old fields where the churches were dormant and to pioneer in new fields. They had expanded rather rapidly without the organization and supervision needed to coordinate and conserve their gains. Their numbers were small and pastors were always scarce.

The stories of the many societies already established and the new ones formed in this era will give a picture of the contribution made by this denomination in the small Iowa city and in the rural village. For this period was the time when the sacrifices of the pioneers began to bear fruit.

The earlier societies that flourished were Bedford, Boone, Cedar Falls, Cedar Rapids, Clarinda, Decorah, Dubuque, Eldora, Elkader, Forrestville, Ft. Dodge, Greeley, Grinnell, Iowa City, Manchester, Marshalltown, Mitchellville, Mt. Pleasant, Newton, Osage, Oskaloosa, Red Oak, Strawberry Point, Tipton, Vinton, Viola, and Waterloo. Some ceased to be active before 1900, namely Dubuque, Eldora, Grinnell, Iowa City, Newton, and Tipton, but a contribution to the community life was made by them.

²Iowa Universalist Convention, President's Notebook.
(hereafter designated as I.U.C., President's Notebook)

Bedford, Decorah and Forrestville, organized prior to 1870, had approximately twenty members to begin the decade but shortly thereafter they ceased to be active parishes.

Boone

The Boone Universalist Church purchased a lot at the corner of Allen and Eighth streets, just across the street from the site of the present United States Post Office; where they built a church which cost four thousand, one hundred eighty-three dollars and eleven cents.³ It was dedicated June 4, 1871, by ^{the} Rev. A. C. Berry who was assisted in the formal ceremonies by the Rev. C. P. Nash.⁴ They used this house of worship until 1899,

"when it was abandoned for a new one which was built on the corner of Carroll and Seventh streets, the dedication of which occurred in the year 1900. The old building was turned over to the contractor, [which] helped in part to pay the expenses incurred by the building of the new church. The lots and the building were sold for \$3,000 which meant a profit of \$2,000 and the present site was purchased of G. Lowery, for \$2,000. The dedication took place in September, 1900, and was conducted by the pastor, Rev. Wallace A. Williams, who was assisted by the visiting clergymen of the Universalist Church, who at the time were here in attendance on the State Convention."⁵

Mrs. Melissa Jane Scott, known to this parish as Grandma Scott, a lineal descendant of Daniel Boone, gave \$3600 toward the building fund in return for an annuity amounting

³ Dr. Effie McCollum Jones, Brief History of the First Universalist Church of Boone, Iowa. (Ms.)

⁴ N. E. Goldthwait, History of Boone County, Iowa, Chicago, 1914, pp. 466-67.

⁵ Ibid. , pp.466-67.

to the annual interest on the amount."⁶ The new church was named the "Boone - Scott Memorial Universalist Church."

In the early days they had the largest congregation of any church in the village of Montana,⁷ which was the pioneer name for Boone when it was a railhead town.

June 12, 1870, the Sunday School was organized. Mr. A. P. Fogg was the first secretary and for the next thirty-three years he was an officer in the school, usually the Superintendent, Treasurer, or Secretary and a devoted, energetic worker in the church. The first year they had one hundred thirty-two pupils with an average attendance of sixty-two.⁸ The following year their average attendance increased to seventy-one and there were continuous records of an active school until September 21, 1895. At that time their average was about thirty-five.

Thirty singing books were sent by Wilmot, Holcomb and Schoonover on July 3, 1871. On Christmas one hundred library books were sent by the St. Paul's Universalist Church of Chicago,⁹ and again in the spring sixty-eight books arrived from Lowell, Massachusetts, and eighty books from Philadelphia. These gifts show the missionary work of the eastern churches.¹⁰

⁶Dr. Effie McCollum Jones, Brief History of the First Universalist Church of Boone, Iowa (Ms.).

⁷Conversation with the Boone city librarian who was an Episcopalian. (The Episcopalians rented the first building for a number of years on Sunday afternoons.)

⁸First Universalist Church of Boone, Iowa, Sunday School, Secretary's Book, p. 111.

⁹Ibid., p. 175.

¹⁰Ibid., p. 176.

"The names of the pastors who served this charge are here given by A. P. Fogg, one of the surviving Charter members, whose memory was very dependable: H. C. Holt, the organizing pastor, who remained about two years; H. P. Smith, one year;¹¹ Reverend [W. P.] Payne, a brilliant energetic minister, one year; following Mr. Payne's retirement, the pulpit was without a pastor about four years;

and then came the Rev. Mary A. Garard, who served for one year.¹² She was ordained on the Sunday prior to October 14, 1882,¹³ while serving this parish. It was the beginning of a long and brilliant career in the ministry. She served in Iowa and other states and made a host of friends who loved her dearly and admired her tremendously. She served two years in Boone with a year's absence intervening, the first woman minister to serve a Boone church. She left here to go to Clinton and also was pastor of the church at Morrison, Illinois.¹⁴

The Rev. B. Brunning, State Superintendent, made Boone his headquarters and filled the pulpit. He came to Montana twenty-eight years before and was engaged in secular business for a time. "He is a clear, distinct and very earnest speaker. His ripened experience in church work, study and observation, fits him fully for the work he has undertaken."¹⁵ In 1883^{the} Rev. T. W. Chrichett was called.

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Another account states that the Revs. Mr. Keyes and Mr. Polk served after Rev. Smith.

¹² Goldthwaite, op. cit., p. 467.

¹³ Boone Standard, October 14, 1882.

¹⁴ Ibid., Nov. 15, 1884 and June 6, 1885.

¹⁵ Ibid., May 30, 1885.

From 1886 - 1892 they had no regular pastor. A lecture by Prof. Eldridge "drew an intelligent audience of teachers" and others who were well repaid. There were a number of supplies such as the Revs. B. F. Rogers, J. F. Shindler, W. P. Payne, and W. L. Swan. By 1890 the church was becoming inactive, so much so that there was practically never a mention in the weekly paper. This notice appeared in 1891 showing a felt need for a liberal society.¹⁶ "A movement is now on foot ... looking to the establishment of a Unitarian Society in Boone."¹⁷

For nine months the Rev. A. H. Curtis fulfilled the duties of the regularly employed pastor. The Rev. Sophronia L. Crum was called June 1, 1893, she served for two and one half years,¹⁸ until December 1895. During her pastorate in 1893, the Rev. J. E. Keyes conducted revival services and the following year the Rev. Mr. Larson served the parish in a similar series of meetings.¹⁹ Perhaps to meet the danger of having another liberal society, such as the Unitarian, to compete with them for the liberal religious thinkers of the community, a warning of which appeared in the papers about five years before, they held a special meeting June 12, 1894, which changed "the constitution so that those not of

¹⁶

Ibid., April 10, 1886 - April 1893.

¹⁷

Ibid., August 29, 1891.

¹⁸

Goldthwaite, Op. cit., p. 467.

¹⁹

Boone Standard, July 29, 1893.

the Universalist faith might become members of the Society. Article two of the Constitution was amended to read: 'There shall be no restriction against membership in this Society on account of religious belief or opinion'. J. B. McHose, a Unitarian, asked for the meeting."²⁰

The Rev. Sophie Gibbs succeeded Mrs. Crum for a like period of service. The former resigned in March, 1899, which surprised the public because they thought that the church relation in that society "was eminently satisfactory to both pastor and people."²¹

The Rev. Amos Crum came May 6 to take up the duties of the pastor. It was he who counselled this congregation during the time when they sold their church, chose a new site and raised the funds for the new edifice. September 23rd they began the work on the basement which they expected to finish that fall.²² One of the Boone parish in describing Dr. and Mrs. Crum said, he was a reserved and thoughtful man who took time to form an opinion; his wife was intellectual and spontaneous. The Rev. W. A. Williams was engaged the year the church was completed and dedicated.

The Universalists of Boone were among the prominent and educated people in the community; for instance, Charles Tucker was the Superintendent of Schools, Judge Ramsey was a lawyer and judge, L. J. Orr was a United States

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Dr. Effie McCollum Jones, Brief History of the First Universalist Church of Boone, Iowa. (Ms.)

21

Boone Standard, March 25, 1899.

22

Ibid., Sept. 23, 1899.

senator, G. T. Ballou and his brother were merchants, John Head was a real estate dealer, W. H. Crooks, was a lawyer and a real estate dealer.

In 1882 they had fifty families contributing to the support of the church and twenty-five families attending, sixty-five pupils were in the Sunday School.²³ As previously noted by 1895 the attendance at the latter had declined to about thirty-five.

Cedar Falls

The First Universalist Church of Cedar Falls was located between Fourth and Fifth on Main Street, on lot number 7, in fractional row of Garrison and Dean's addition,²⁴ which is now the site of the Brown Furniture Store. One source represents the society as organizing in 1878,²⁵ though there had been an active group fourteen or fifteen years before that time. Perhaps they took out articles of incorporation or were reorganized in 1878. In 1880 they were received into convention fellowship. As far back as Mrs. F. D. Pierce, could remember they had a pastor until about 1885 when the Rev. F. D. Pierce served them for two years, thereafter they did not have a resident one.²⁶ With

²³ Dr. Effie McCollum Jones, Brief History of the First Universalist Church of Boone, Iowa. (Ms.)

²⁴ I.U.C., President's Notebook.

²⁵ Peter Melendy, Historical Record of Cedar Falls, Cedar Falls, 1893, p. 39.

²⁶ Conversation with Mrs. F. D. Pierce a life long member of this parish, she was dedicated by Rev. Hines.

the aid of the ministers from Waterloo and the tenacity of the little band they retained their society and their property. In 1893 they had a church membership of forty and the Sunday School numbered fifty under the superintendency of Miss Nellie Pierce. The Rev. Ben Wallace Jones of Waterloo was the pastor.²⁷ Mrs. Pierce, who grew up in this parish can recall that the following were members; a Crosby family, Ida Overman, and her two daughters, Herbert Godfrey, H. Bl Cropper, his mother and his aunt, Mrs. Butterworth, S. A. Bishop and family, Dr., Mrs. and Nell Pierce, V. W. Foote and family, H. B. Gilkey and family, Hary Pierce, Mr. and Mrs. John Jeffers and Mr. and Mrs. Ufford.²⁸

They were last represented in the convention sessions in 1896 but they retained their property until 1915.²⁹

Cedar Rapids

The Cedar Rapids Universalist society was organized in 1869 and a constitution was drafted. "During this time the young society had called as its minister,^{the} Rev. W. C. Brooks. Through his efforts and the hearty cooperation of the members, a small budget was raised to enable them to conduct Sunday services in what was now called 'Universalist Hall' upstairs over Fifteen Commercial Street" (now South First Street).³⁰ Miss Helen Burton's sister remembers going

²⁷ Melendy, op. cit.

²⁸ Pierce, Op. cit.

²⁹ I.U.C., President's Notebook.

³⁰ Rev. W.A.W. Argow, An Historical Sketch of the Peoples Church, pamphlet, 1925, p. 2.

to Sunday School there. Their father was one of the founders of the church. In 1865 he was principal of the high school, and later head of the schools in Cedar Rapids.³¹

"Rev. [Mr.] Brooks was succeeded after a three year pastorate by Rev. B. F. Snook, who in turn continued to minister for one year, [after which the] Rev. B. F. Rogers was called. Mr. Rogers was succeeded by Rev. W. W. Nutting. During this time the panic of seventy-two and seventy-three seriously handicapped the material work of the church. Time and again business meetings were held with a view to purchasing a lot upon which to erect a church building. But each time these efforts came to naught; there being insufficient funds available. At length F. J. Upton purchased and in turn gave to the society a lot sixty by one hundred feet, located on the corner of Park Avenue and Madison Street (now Third Avenue and Sixth Street). Many of the more conservative members felt that they should not 'go so far out of the city into the sandbars and sandhills.' Others again felt that when the city grew 'the church would then be just at the outskirts of town.' What foresight these courageous few had! Now the city stretches two and a half miles beyond and all this has happened in fifty years!

"With the acquisition of the lot there followed years of struggle, hardship and sacrifice. At length \$3,500 had been secured in cash and pledges to justify the venture of erecting a building. The story is told that one family went without coffee, then selling at fourteen cents a pound, for a whole year, to enable them to ... pay ... their pledge to the church.

"At length, [on] Sunday, July 1, 1875, the corner stone was laid ... by the Iowa Grand Lodge of Ancient Free and Accepted Masons. Over six hundred Masons from Dubuque, Farley, Davenport, Monticello, Anamosa, Marion, Shellsburg and Cedar Rapids participated in the celebration. 'The procession moved down Park (Third) Avenue, under a triumphal Arch, beautiful with flowers, to the site of the new church'. Among many addresses delivered by the Grand Lodge officers, the outstanding one was by Past Grand Master, E. A. Guilbert of Dubuque, who spoke on 'The Universal Brotherhood of Man.' In the evening the ladies of the church tendered a reception in Masonic Hall to the guests of the day. Though ... weatherbeaten, the

³¹Helen L. Burton, Cedar Rapids, Iowa, to Elva Tucker, Cedar Falls, Iowa, April 16, 1943.

inscription on the cornerstone can still be read:
 ... 'Christ will Conquer; Laid by A. F. and A. M.,
 July-1, 1875.'

"Again three years of the most heroic sacrifice followed, during which time it was possible to build only the first story of the building. A temporary roof was spread over it and herein they worshipped for three years. But, 'the tide in the affairs of men' began to turn, ... enabling them ... complete ... the building. On Sunday, June 16, 1878, the entire building was dedicated. The sermon of dedication was preached by Dr. J. H. Tuttle of Minneapolis. In the afternoon [the] Rev. [Mr.] Hines of Cedar Falls spoke, [and] music ... [was] furnished by the Grace Episcopal church of this city. In the evening, Dr. Hanson of Chicago, preached after which sufficient money was obtained in pledges to free the church from debt. The entire value of the property, including the lot was now \$11,000. No record of these early years is complete, without the names of Mr. and Mrs. C. D. Van Vechten, Mr. and Mrs. G. F. Van Vechten, Mr. and Mrs. J. F. Allison, A. W. Thompson, Col. Charles A. Clark, Thomas Devendorf, I. C. Van Alstyne, Mr. and Mrs. O. E. Coe, C. N. Jenkins, Mrs. Marian C. Carnegie, Mrs. Ed. Rank, Mrs. Rachel Rosecrans, Mr. and Mrs. H. R. Buser and Mrs. L. G. Cooper.

"After these days of rejoicing came a time of apprehension. Unfortunate circumstances arose as the result of tactlessness on the part of a few. This resulted in the church being closed for over a year. After the lapse of some time a young minister, Rev. W. A. Pratt, was called, bringing to this work the idealism of youth, together with ... ability to organize the frayed ends of a tangled situation into a working unit. Progress was again made and success [seemed] assured."³²

In 1880, after the Rev. Mr. Pratt had received a call from a church in Minneapolis and declined it, the Cedar Rapids Standard wrote, "The Universalist congregation are to be congratulated on their pastor's decision. With literary and scientific attainments of the highest order, coupled with never tiring industry in his chosen work, Rev. Pratt is

³² Argow, op. cit., pp. 2-8.

building up his church."³³ He was succeeded by the Rev. J. H. Palmer, who served the church for nearly twelve years, this being the longest pastorate in the history of this church.

"It is impossible to record in a few words the influence these ministers exerted upon the lives of the members and the city in general. Not yet has there been devised a [method] by which human influence can be measured. Its good is ... diffused, and continues as an invisible deposit in the lives of men.

"It was during the ministry of Mr. Palmer that Mrs. Mary L. Pingrey of Wilton, Iowa, gave two thousand dollars to free the church from the debt that had been incurred during the period of storm and stress alluded to, while the church found it necessary to suspend services. On February 5, 1899, a Thanksgiving service was held in appreciation of Mrs. Pingrey's fine gift. Mrs. Pingrey had become interested in liberalism through the preaching of a Rev. Briggs, who was conducting a Bible class at Wilton, Iowa, where he gathered a number of people in Mrs. Pingrey's home. Mr. Briggs had been expelled from the Methodist church for preaching 'the eternal love of God', insisting that 'all souls would some day be restored to sonship with God'. This of course was heresy, and called for his expulsion from the fellowship of his brethren. To commemorate the generosity of Mrs. Pingrey a stone tablet was placed in the rear of the church, where it may still be seen."³⁴

The ministers who served this congregation from 1870 to 1900 were:

Rev. W. C. Brooks	Rev. H. W. Chase
Rev. B. T. Snook	Rev. D. H. Rogan
Rev. B. F. Rogers	Rev. W. A. Pratt
Rev. W. W. Nutting	Rev. J. H. Palmer ³⁵

Their membership has included a number of professional people such as Dr. E. Bliss and J. T. Smith; City School Superintendent, Charles W. Burton; attorneys C. D.

³³ Cedar Rapids Standard, November 29, 1888.

³⁴ Argow, op. cit., pp. 1-8.

³⁵ Ibid., p. 11.

Van Vechten and C. N. Jenkins. Many of the early membership must have been affiliated with the Masonic Lodge indicated by the ceremony when the cornerstone was laid. Many of them were people of modest means because they had difficulty with a church debt and their church pledges were not easily paid.

Clarinda

In southwestern Iowa there have been two active Universalist churches. The one at Shenandoah was begun in the latter part of the century and survived but a scant generation. The one at Clarinda was begun in 1859 and was active for a full half century. In 1880 there were twenty-five members, their ranks having been depleted by a number of deaths and removals.³⁶ During the next ten years the Rev. Miss Whitney and the Rev. B. F. Snook served the parish. The latter came in 1884 and remained for at least six years. He did "a noble work in preaching the great and universal love of an All-wise Creator and a kind heavenly Father." During that decade many prominent members of this society had passed away yet it was in a flourishing condition in 1890 with sixty members in the society and a Sunday School with forty pupils.³⁷

Shortly thereafter the Rev. Mr. Snook must have departed and the church, pastorless, declined in prosperity. The
 ^ Rev. W. W. Merritt of Red Oak and some of the lay members

³⁶ History of Page County, Iowa, Des Moines, 1880, p. 564.

³⁷ Biographical History of Page County, Iowa, Chicago, 1890, p. 344.

held some services. In the summer of 1893 Rev. J. E. Keyes an able speaker and a fine soloist held a series of meetings, organized a fine choir that gave concerts and a large and active Y.P.C.U. At one party the latter entertained fifty friends.³⁸ In October the Rev. W. L. Swan and his wife arrived to assume the pastoral duties. In November a Sunday School was organized and things in general prospered with them. "The Y.P.C.U. of the Universalist Church is growing in interest. The young people are to be commended in their warm and cordial reception of all that come to their meeting, and the devotional spirit that is manifested shows the good seed already springing up from its effort."³⁹ "The congregations at the Universalist church are gradually increasing and are made up of persons who think."⁴⁰ "It surely looks as if the Universalists were once more launched for a prosperous trip. Their audiences are better than they have been for years and still increasing. Their Sunday School, considering the past experience of that church, is simply phenomenal, while their Y.P.C.U. with its large attendance and the enthusiastic manner in which the members move forward and take their parts is a surprise and a delight to everyone."⁴¹

The Swan's left and the Rev. L. F. Porter and his

³⁸ The Clarinda Herald, June 28, 1893 - Oct. 20, 1893.

³⁹ Ibid., January 5, 1894.

⁴⁰ Ibid., January 9, 1894.

⁴¹ Ibid., January 19, 1894.

wife, the Rev. Charlotte Porter became the pastors. They were there just a short time when he died at the age of sixty-eight. "He had been sick but a few days, jaundice being the prevailing disease, and his death was a shock to his hosts of friends in Clarinda and elsewhere." He had come west from New York State, where he had organized many parishes and built five church buildings.⁴²

It was a severe blow to the local parish after having enjoyed such a splendid revival of interest to lose two ministers within three years by removal and death. They obtained a third pastor after an interval of six months, ^{the} Rev. M. L. Estey of Dixon, Illinois.⁴³ Never again was the society, as vigorous as it had been. Jacob Loy, a charter member,⁴⁴ passed away soon after the death of Mr. Porter. In the summer of 1896 they were again without a shepherd and no mention of services was made until the week of March 13, 1897 when the Rev. Dr. Crum of Webster City and the Rev. Sophie F. Gibbs of Boone and other Universalist clergymen held a series of meetings in the hope of reviving the once promising parish.⁴⁵ The Rev. H. L. F. Gillespie of Manchester held occasional services there until January 4, 1901.⁴⁶ The church was not growing and there were few

⁴² Ibid., March 15, 1895.

⁴³ Ibid., October 15, 1895.

⁴⁴ Ibid., March 26, 1895.

⁴⁵ Ibid., March 4, 1897.

⁴⁶ Ibid., June 28, 1898 - Jan. 4, 1901.

evidences of services and no auxiliary activities. The membership had dwindled from seventy a decade earlier to ten by 1900.

Des Moines

In 1873, the Des Moines Universalist Church was reported to have twenty families, a Sunday School of fifty and a frame building valued at \$7000 (which was erected in 1869) but they were pastorless. A decade later they were no longer listed by the General Convention as an Iowa parish.⁴⁷ In 1894 they were last represented in the state convention.⁴⁸ From 1870 - 1900 a number of the state officers were drawn from this parish; namely, William H. Fleming, F. A. Bomer and O. B. Ayers.⁴⁹

Dubuque

The Dubuque parish, one of the oldest in Iowa, was very prosperous until in the 1890's when, for no very clear reason, it became inactive. They seemed on the threshold of expansion, then in a short space of time ceased to function as a church in the last years of the century.

August 3, 1870, the Rev. W. T. Clark was elected to fill the vacancy caused by the resignation of the Rev. Mr. Hanson. The call was subsequently withdrawn, however,

⁴⁷ Universalist Register and Almanac, Boston, 1873 and 1883.

⁴⁸ I.U.C., President's Notebook.

⁴⁹ Universalist Register and Almanac, Boston, 1870-1900.

and the Rev. W. R. Chamberlain was substituted, remaining until January 1, 1872, when he was succeeded by the Rev. J. N. Pardee. He was a "young man but brought to his work a thorough education, much experience and what was worth more than all else -- a sincere heart and a determination to succeed." There was a Sunday School of a little more than one hundred. The first Sunday he said, "You have seen fit to choose me to be the Captain of this host, yet the work is yours as much as mine. I propose no policy, I promise no course except what the times shall require and hearts may need, and then I promise to do what my limited strength and wisdom will allow; and hope as much from you."⁵⁰

The Rev. Laird Collier, a Unitarian, preached the Rev. Mr. Pardee's ordination sermon; Rev. J. W. Hanson delivered the charge in which he impressively admonished him as to his Christian duties and presented to him a Holy Bible, the rock upon which he must establish his faith - the his truths. A friend and classmate of the candidate, Rev. Henry E. Campbell of Murray Chapel, Chicago came forward and extended the right hand of fellowship.

"I give you my hand and my heart goes out with it. I stand with you in service and may the very God of peace be with us."

The Rev. Dr. C. M. Reed gave the charge to the people,

"First, then, never let it slip from your memory that the laborer is worthy of his wages. Pay his salary

cheerfully and promptly, so that he may, from this direction find nothing arising to embarrass him in his study or agitate him in his feelings You will expect him to be in his place in the temple, on every Sunday prepared for the services. He will anticipate the same from you. You do not hire him to speak to empty pews, but to living, thinking immortal souls.

"Be not narrow yourselves and cherish no desire to have your preacher become so. ... The policy of the age is growth. The temper of the century is tolerance."

He further urged them not to be alarmed if they observed him enjoying some form of recreation. It would make him a more interesting and effective minister.

As reported it appears to have been an unusually fine and inspiring service both to the new pastor and to the parish which had the privilege of participating in the occasion.⁵¹ Mr. Pardee remained in charge until Sept. 1, 1873, when his resignation was accepted, and the Rev. Asa Countryman was called, who continued to officiate until February 1, 1877. On May first of the same year, the Rev. W. S. Balch took charge⁵² and remained until 1880. The congregation numbered about three hundred, and the property was valued at \$15,000.⁵³

^{The} Rev. George B. Stocking served the following year and ^{the} Rev. Amos Crum began his pastorate in 1882.⁵⁴ It was the longest one in the history of that church, continuing

⁵¹ Dubuque Daily Herald, Jan. 3, 1873.

⁵² History of Dubuque County, Iowa, 1880 (fly leaf gone, no publisher or publication date), p. 617.

⁵³ Ibid., p. 617.

⁵⁴ Dubuque Daily Herald, May 26, 1883.

until 1893.⁵⁵ He was a man of unusual intellectual capacities and had a talent^{for} spiritual leadership that was felt throughout the state, during all his pastoral work in Dubuque, Webster City and Boone.

His comments on the healthy state of the church in 1883 at the time of their silver anniversary were a direct contradiction of their collapse in the 90's.

"The Ladies Aid Society has from the first been a most active and serviceable branch of the church, and while a full account of its manifold labors would show important services most gracefully rendered, it is just to say that the Ladies Aid Society of this church was more prosperously conducted than at the present time.

"While the changes in pastors may seem to have been quite numerous during the past twenty-five years, it is mostly of record that the members of our choir have been remarkably constant in their service. ... Mrs. C. H. McArthur, Mrs. J. K. Graves, Mr. R. E. Graves and Mr. Henry Kingman have been our church quartette for twenty years, and Mrs. McArthur and Mr. Graves have been members of this choir for the full period of twenty-five years.

"The Sunday School pursues an even course, doing a modest but efficient work. The society is ably served by an efficient board of trustees whose case is that the purpose for which the church exists shall prosper in their hands.

"We bear grateful testimony to the reciprocal feelings that exist between our church and its pastor and the various laborers in the Christian field throughout our city. And thus, at the close of a quarter century of organic existence, ... with pledges of broadest fellowship ... toward the living, we turn toward the days and tasks that are to come praying for that unity of spirit which makes all burdens light, and for the benediction of that master in whose name the church shall triumph."⁵⁶

⁵⁵ Dubuque Daily Herald, Jan. 15, 1893.

⁵⁶ Ibid., May 26, 1883.

The society was reincorporated June 27, 1887.

The articles were filed with W. Lewis, the county recorder. Those mentioned were "L. D. Randall, W. S. Couch, W. E. Massey, O. E. Guernsey, D. D. W. Carver, T. G. Cragin, E. Chamberlain, E. M. Dickey, J. K. Graves, R. E. Graves, W. P. Allen, L. W. Parker, George N. Raymond, Robert McArthur, Frank Adams and John McArthur."⁵⁷

In June 1892, during Dr. Crum's pastorate he presided at the examination and ordination of Ben Wallace and Effie McCollum Jones. The young man was reared in Dubuque and was a member of the parish. He had met his wife in the theological school at Lombard College. The pastor preached the ordination sermon and was assisted by the Revs. Charlotte Porter, Sophronia L. Crum, A. K. Beem, and J. H. Palmer. The ordaining church council was wisely chosen considering the dual nature of this ordination. It was a noteworthy service.

"Rev. Amos Crum's sermon was an able effort, and was delivered along lines with special reference to the man and woman whose lives have been consecrated to the work of religion. The text was 'Feed My Lambs, Feed MY Sheep,' after showing what constituted proper spiritual food for the lambs and sheep of God's flock the speaker said that truth should not be anchored to the dark ages of the past. The human soul is progressive and prophetic. To find the golden age we should not look regretfully back over our shoulders, but rather into the future, with intelligence and hopefulness."⁵⁸

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Dr. Effie McCollum Jones, Sketch of the First Universalist Church of Dubuque, Iowa. (Ms.)

58

Dubuque Daily Herald, June 29, 1892.

These young people served at Waterloo, Iowa until called to a pastorate in Vermont. They were there but a short time when the Rev. B. W. Jones passed away in 1898. His wife returned to Waterloo in 1904 and for most of her fifty years in the Universalist ministry she has served the parishes of Waterloo and Webster City, and the state at large, serving most of that time in some capacity on the State Convention Executive Board as Secretary, Trustee, Vice President or President. She is a brilliant woman, who has challenged the thinkers of her church, her community and her state. Her spiritual leadership has been so steadfast and alert that she has served on the General Convention Board as a trustee and upon a number of standing committees. June 29, 1892, was a red letter day in that Dubuque Church.

Within six months the Rev. Mr. Crum resigned. The Rev. Robert H. Towne of Marlboro, N. H. began his pastorate there April 2, 1893 with a church of fifty members. On January 30, 1894, the church on the corner of Tenth and Main was offered for sale at \$20,000 because of a raise in the street. They planned to build a church elsewhere to cost not less than \$10,000. They must have disposed of it because by March third they were meeting in the library. The Rev. Mr. Towne changed the name to the "People's Church" in February of 1894, but by March he had resigned his pastorate. In the spring and summer of that year the Rev. J. S. Cantwell of Chicago held services in the I.O.O.F. Hall. By fall Miss Sophie Gibbs became their pastor holding

services in the library or the Odd Fellows Hall. Unfortunately she was ill so services were not continuous. By November of 1895 she was compelled to resign.⁵⁹ Thereafter, their services were irregular but they maintained a church organization until the close of the first decade in the twentieth century.⁶⁰

Eldora

The Rev. T. C. Eaton, the organizing pastor in Eldora, was probably serving the parish in 1870 for the previous year they had dedicated their brick church building. Afterward the Rev. G. S. Gowdy assumed the leadership⁶¹ and gave full measure of spirited repartee to the Orthodox. He preached doctrinal sermons at the regular Sunday services presenting Universalist theology clearly; and he directed the church auxiliaries effectively.

In 1874 the Iowa State Convention met in Eldora with this parish that numbered only thirteen members; within ten days^{the} Rev. J. [E.] Manford of Chicago preached in the church. It is probable he might have come west for the state meeting and remained for a regular service.⁶² That year in December the parish gave a donation party for the benefit of the Rev. Mr. Gowdy which netted \$90.00.⁶³ The impression of generosity is given but the necessity for this

⁵⁹ Dubuque Daily Herald, Jan. 15, 1893-1900.

⁶⁰ Dr. Effie McCollum Jones, Sketch of First Universalist Church of Dubuque, Iowa (Ms.)

⁶¹ History of Hardin County, Iowa, Springfield, 1883, p.626.

⁶² Eldora Herald, Sept. 2 and 9, 1874.

⁶³ Ibid., Dec. 2, 1874.

type of social also reveals scant contributions or a limited budget.

Unfortunately for the good people here he received a call from Albert Lea and Wells, Minnesota, both reportedly strong and wealthy societies.⁶⁴ He must have accepted for once in June, once in July and once in November Rev. B. F. Snook held services, otherwise the church was closed.⁶⁵ On March 7, 1877 appeared the following summons to the Eldora Universalists; "Members of the First Universalist Society of Eldora, Hardin County, Iowa are hereby requested to meet at the church, on Tuesday, March 13, at two o'clock, p.m. DeRoy Ellsworth, Secretary."⁶⁶

A week later, the purpose of the meeting and the action taken was divulged by this statement made in the county newspaper.

"Mention was made a couple of weeks ago that the German Church of Eldora wished to purchase the Universalist Church building to hold services in. As no meeting has been held in the building for some time, the proposition was looked upon favorably by a few of the Universalists, and a meeting of the Directors was called. They met yesterday, and after a short consultation it was decided not to sell the building, and a subscription was soon started for the purpose of raising a fund for the minister's salary, and we hope soon to hear that a minister has been secured and that services will be held regularly every Sabbath. The society at this meeting also raised enough funds to free the church entirely from debt."⁶⁷

⁶⁴ Ibid., May 8, 1876.

⁶⁵ Ibid., June 28, 1876 - Nov. 8, 1876.

⁶⁶ Ibid., March 7, 1877.

⁶⁷ Ibid., March 14, 1877.

The Rev. B. F. Snook, "one of the most popular preachers in this section", accepted the charge. The week he began regular monthly services, there had been several revivals, and coupled with their resumption of services this notice appeared in the paper. "The people of Eldora have taken quite an interest in religious matters for the past four weeks."⁶⁸ Intermittent services were held when he was gone on an European tour the first six months in 1878. Perhaps because of his lecture tours and other charges his pastorate was closed in 1878 or 1879.⁶⁹

From 1880~~1~~1889 there were occasional services by the Rev. Marianna T. Folsom of Marshalltown, the Rev. B. F. Rogers, the state missionary, the Rev. Mary Gerard, and the Rev. B. F. Snook. The latter gave a series of four lectures on his European and Near East travels, and while pastor at Clarinda in 1888 he came here for a course of five sermons on such subjects as:

"God's Character and Purpose in the Creation of Man
 The Mission of Christ
 Hell, what and where is it?
 Atonement
 Paradise Lost and Restored."⁷⁰

The Rev. Mr. Gowdy preached two Sundays in March of 1889 on "If Universalism is true why Preach It" and "Why

⁶⁸ Ibid., May 9, 1877.

⁶⁹ Ibid., Jan. 30, 1878.

⁷⁰ Ibid., June 2, 1880 - Sept. 6, 1888.

I am a Universalist."⁷¹ In April he traded his property to R. O. Fenton and placed this notice in the Herald, "Until further arranged there will be preaching regularly, morning and evening at the Universalist Church in Eldora.

[Signed] Rev. G. S. Gowdy, Pastor."⁷²

He invited the Revs. T. W. Woodrow, B. F. Snook, J. E. Keyes, L. F. Porter and Dr. Amos Crum to conduct special services. The Rev. Sophronia L. Crum was the guest speaker on several occasions as was also the Rev. T. E. Dotter, who later became the pastor.⁷³ The choir and orchestra gave several concerts and made a fine contribution to the weekly worship services. Dr. N. C. Morse was their very able director. His widow was the only living Universalist in the city in 1943. She became a member of the Universalist Church in Kentucky when she was sixteen. The young people gave a number of special programs centered around the life and writings of famous American poets, such as Whittier and Longfellow.⁷⁴

Rev. Father Gowdy was living there and filling the pulpit whenever some other minister was not available. He was the driving force that was making the years from 1890 to 1894 such successful ones for this parish. The officers for 1891 for the Society were: President, W. J.

⁷¹ Ibid., March 8 and 15, 1889.

⁷² Ibid., April 19, 1889.

⁷³ Ibid., August 16, 1889 - Nov. 1893.

⁷⁴ Ibid., Feb. 5, 1891.

Brooks; Secretary, Mrs. J. E. Snyder; Treasurer, Frank Narum; Trustees, DeRoy Ellsworth, D. G. Meader, Dr. N. C. Morse; for the church organization, Moderator, Mrs. T. G. Copp; Secretary, Mrs. J. E. Snyder; Treasurer, Mrs. H. F. Carter. They had retained separate church and society memberships.⁷⁵ The Rev. Mr. Gowdy's flock were deeply grateful for his help. They held a surprise party for him and Mother Gowdy on their sixtieth wedding anniversary and gave them two very fine and comfortable chairs. The Rev. Thomas Dotter in presenting them said, "You have had a long march battling together against the stern realities of this world and we know that you must be tired. We beg leave, therefore, to present you each with an easy chair, hoping that your years may be lengthened and that you may yet spend many happy years together."⁷⁶

The Rev. W. B. Washburn became the pastor in January 1894,⁷⁷ however, a year later the Rev. Amos Crum of Webster City and the Rev. B. F. Snook of Iowa Falls and the Rev. A. K. Beem of Osage came to make an investigation and within a month he had resigned the charge.⁷⁸

The Rev. J. E. Keyes held a service in September, 1895 and thereafter there were no further notices until March 18, 1898 when the society of approximately twenty people

⁷⁵ Ibid., Jan. 16, 1891.

⁷⁶ Ibid., Sept. 30, 1890.

⁷⁷ Ibid., Jan. 18, 1894.

⁷⁸ Ibid., Jan. 3, - Feb. 21, 1895.

met to reorganize. Thereafter the Rev. H. L. Gillespie, the Rev. A. R. Tillinghast and the Rev. L. C. Esperson were guests of the parish.⁷⁹ In December 1899, Father Gowdy, eighty-nine years old, sold his property and moved again to Albert Lea, Minnesota.⁸⁰ Without this valiant patriarch the church in Eldora ceased to function. Grant Tyler writes he well remembers Rev. Gowdy who was a neighbor of his family when they lived in the southeast part of Eldora. He "was a most kindly man - kind neighbor and good citizen. As a child, I now recall visiting that church with our mother and loved to hear [the] Rev. [Mr.] Gowdy preach ... almost every sermon carrying a bit of poetry out of the book he loved so well."⁸¹

Elkader

The Boardman Grove Universalist Church in Elkader purchased the Congregational church building for one thousand five hundred dollars in 1870. At that time the following new members were added: Sally Kimber, J. Stebbins, T. Barnum, Rosanna Barnum, W. B. Smith, Fred Ernst, Lysetta Ernst, B. Knopp, Mrs. P. Nye and Mrs. Wright.

By 1882 "five of the members have died and of the rest, all except five have removed from the state." Their last four pastors were the Revs. S. Wakefield, P. Hathaway,

⁷⁹ Ibid., March 18, 1898 - August 19, 1899.

⁸⁰ Ibid., Dec. 9, 1899.

⁸¹ Grant Tyler, Eldora, Iowa to Elva Tucker, Cedar Falls, Iowa, April 12, 1943.

J. W. Hicks and George Odione. Just when they served was not stated but they were all there before 1882.⁸² Occasional services were held as part of the activities of that circuit in Northeast Iowa. By 1900 they were still considered a distinct parish containing only seven families. The Rev. W. J. Herbener was the part time pastor.⁸³

Ft. Dodge

A Ft. Dodge Universalist Society appeared in 1869 in the records of the state meetings. Eight years later Harry Strong willed three thousand dollars to the local society with the stipulation, that it was to accumulate until it amounted to ten thousand dollars, when it was to be used to finance the building of a church. The society faded away and no church was ever erected.⁸⁴

Greeley

In 1870 Greeley had a building and the Rev. Joy Bishop was the pastor. He was followed by Elder Stebbins.⁸⁵ In 1878, the pulpit was occupied every alternate Sabbath by the Rev. J. N. Hicks of Strawberry Point. The trustees were J. S. Drybread, J. Baker, Benjamin Pinkley; Clerk, C. S. Taylor; Treasurer, James Pinckley.⁸⁶ The Rev. Amos Crum

⁸² History of Clayton County, Iowa, Chicago, 1882, p.646.

⁸³ Universalist Register, Boston, 1900.

⁸⁴ I.U.C., Secretary's Record, Vol. 3, p. 242.

⁸⁵ Ella Ellis, Brief History of the Universalist Church in Greeley, Iowa, (Ms.).

⁸⁶ History of Delaware County, Iowa, Chicago, 1878, p.531.

was pastor for the longest time and Rev. Mrs. Crum was their last one.⁸⁷

When the church was built in 1868 the society must not have owned the land because "on February 11, 1888, H. A. Correll and his wife Elizabeth, conveyed to the Universalist Convention of Iowa" a plot of land "ten rods east and west by seven rods north and south." Then on February 3, 1890,

"ten of the lawful heirs of Elizabeth Correll conveyed to the trustees of the Universalist church of the County of Delaware, State of Iowa, one half acre of ground' in the south East corner of the south east quarter of the southwest quarter of section 20, Township 90. This conveyance by the heirs must have been made to correct an error made by Mr. Correll because the church is located"⁸⁸ on the latter plot of land.

Although the Greeley parish was small they built and maintained a small building and were active for about forty years. In 1874 their membership was fifteen and by 1900 they had thirty members. They were fortunately located so that they were benefited by a well organized circuit.

Grinnell

The church in Grinnell was not as successful as the one at Greeley. It was organized either in the winter of 1867, 1868⁸⁹ or as the historian's records state on

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Ellis, op. cit.

⁸⁸

Franklin J. Platt to S. J. Oldfield, October 12, 1909.

⁸⁹

L. F. Parker, History of Poweshiek County, Iowa, Chicago, 1911, p. 381.

June 11, 1870.⁹⁰ Meetings had been held in the town even before the Civil War. Their first pastor was the Rev. C. P. Nash, who was living in Newton and came here once a month. He remained in charge for two years.⁹¹ Whether they had another regular pastor was questionable, though one sketch revealed the names of the Revs. S. C. Clark, O. F. Van Cise, W. P. Payne, Fidelia W. Gillette and E. T. Briggs as pastors. In 1880 their membership was about twenty-five. The previous year they had entertained the State Convention. 1896 was the last year in which they were represented in that state meeting.⁹²

Iowa City

In January 1870 services were resumed in the Iowa City church under a new pastor, the Rev. Augusta J. Chapin. Early in that year the Board took definite action in regard to their property; they purchased a building on the church lot belonging to a Mr. Ryan for \$900,⁹³ and when they were unable to collect the land rent from Mrs. Shoemaker, who had erected a house on the church lot, they offered her \$100 and terminated the lease.⁹⁴

On March tenth, T. M. Banbury moved "that we take immediate steps to secure the erection of a House of Worship."

⁹⁰ Dr. Effie McCollum Jones, Sketch of the Universalist Church, Grinnell, Iowa (Ms.) (hereafter Grinnell Sketch).

⁹¹ Parker, op. cit., p. 381.

⁹² Grinnell Sketch, op. cit.

⁹³ The First Universalist Church of Iowa City, Iowa, Secretary's Record, p. 59.

⁹⁴ Ibid., p. 61.

Messrs. Sangster, Banbury and Cornell were appointed to report plans and estimates on a building.⁹⁵ April 18, they voted to buy the lot on the corner of Iowa Avenue and Clinton Street which was then owned by Mr. Scales. They agreed to pay three thousand dollars and commissioned John P. Irish to negotiate the purchase⁹⁶ which was accomplished by August 15.⁹⁷ Mr. Banbury reported a plan for a building costing twelve thousand dollars.⁹⁸ The Treasurer, Peter Roberts, resigned after serving in that capacity since 1858. Mr. Franklin Kimball was chosen to fill the vacancy temporarily. In August, J. Norwood, who had served as Clerk as long as Mr. Roberts had been Treasurer, resigned to accept the latter's position. George Feeler became the Clerk.⁹⁹

Miss Chapin was very successful in her pastoral work for on Easter, sixteen persons were admitted to membership.¹⁰⁰ In August she was going East soon to solicit aid in raising the fourteen thousand dollars for their building project. They planned to raise eight thousand locally.¹⁰¹

December 7th, the society accepted the plans of A. N. White, an architect of Syracuse, New York upon the

95

Ibid., p. 60.

96

Ibid., p. 62.

97

Ibid., p. 63.

98

Ibid., p. 62.

99

Ibid., pp. 62 & 63.

100

Ibid., p. 61.

101

Ibid., p. 64.

recommendation of Miss Chapin, Messrs. Sheets and Kimball.¹⁰² March 29th, 1871 the Building Committee was authorized to let the contracts for the excavation of the basement and cutting the stone for the same.¹⁰³ They also authorized the Trustees to borrow five hundred dollars, showing that they did not have sufficient funds. From time to time they were voting to disposses those who had built on the church land grants, to collect on overdue notes, or instructed an owner to move his building at once, to collect land rent due or cancel existing leases.¹⁰⁴ May 25, 1871 they distributed subscription books for the building pledges. They "Resolved that we will use every endeavor that the work already commenced on the new church edifice may continue without interruption until it is completed."¹⁰⁵

At a Board meeting August 18th, "Mr. Irish moved that the Board present to the next ensuing general convention of the Universalist Church, an application for a loan of \$5,000, said loan to be fortified by a statement that it shall be secured by income from leases of church property." The motion carried and Miss Chapin was appointed loan agent before the Convention.¹⁰⁶

The pastor and Mr. Nelson were instructed to devote

102

Ibid., pp. 65 & 69.

103

Ibid., p. 70.

104

Ibid., pp. 65 & 71.

105

Ibid., p. 71.

106

Ibid., p. 76.

their time for four weeks to collecting subscriptions. The former was excused from preaching. However, they were not able to obliterate the financial cloud because on December 28th, 1872 they borrowed of E. A. Brown four thousand dollars and gave a note and mortgage on the church.

Meanwhile the corner stone had been laid on August 31st in the previous year. They had enclosed local and denominational papers, a testament and a historical sketch in the handwriting of Miss Chapin. The officers were: Trustees, John P. Irish, G. G. Cornell, Hugh Brown, J. N. Seydel; Clerk, W. C. Preston; Treasurer, J. Norwood Clark; and the president was H. H. Winchester, one of the charter members (and a descendant of Elbanan Winchester of denomination fame). There was a total of seventy-four church members, fourteen in the Ladies Industrial Circle; G. G. Cornell was Superintendent of the Sunday School and was supported by a staff of ten teachers.¹⁰⁷ December 26th, 1872 the Society voted to incorporate and authorized H. H. Winchester, the president and Horace Kimball to execute their wishes.¹⁰⁸

By January 12, 1873 the audience room had been completed and furnished. It was formally dedicated to "the worship of the Universal Father." The minister, the Rev. Miss Chapin was too hoarse to preach. The Rev. R. H. Pullman delivered the sermon, Miss Chapin pronounced a sentence of dedication, the address to the parish and church was given

¹⁰⁷

Augusta J. Chapin, History of the (Iowa City) Church. (Manuscript).

¹⁰⁸ The First Universalist Church of Iowa City, Iowa, Secretary's Record, p. 83.

by the Rev. B. F. Snook, both the Revs. L. G. Powers and M. Grosley offered prayer during the service.¹⁰⁹

Miss Chapin resigned her charge March 22nd, 1873 because of ill health. She had been hoarse for some time and felt the same cause was undermining her general health. She felt she needed a complete rest. She wrote "our relations as pastor and people have been so long continued and so pleasant that it is with deep sorrow that I pen these lines which must sever them."

"The members of the congregation and parish of the first Universalist Church of Iowa City do here record their measureless appreciation of her great service to them as a church and as individuals. Tending us without a house of worship, shelterless and the victims of every vicissitude that can befall a church, paralyzed beyond the power of good in the community with neither place nor recognition, disintegrated and disorganized with no rallying point nor common purpose, by the inspiration of her energy and example of her self-sacrifice the scattered flock has been gathered to its fold, friends beyond our former borders have been raised up to us and our organized work has been manifest."¹¹⁰

After voicing this tribute they decided to postpone indefinitely the consideration of her resignation, giving her a leave of absence and obtaining temporary supplies for the pulpit. On December 12, 1873 she asked again to be released. They accepted her resignation effective the first of the following month. They had hoped that she would recover and could continue her splendid work with them.

"Resolved that in taking this action the Parish also conveys

109

Ibid., p. 86.

110

Ibid., pp. 87 - 90.

to her the assurance of deep appreciation of her unselfish work in the holy cause to which her life is dedicated, and the best hopes for her continued professional success."¹¹¹

In bidding a final farewell to this able pastor they did not bid adieu to their financial worries. They desired to sell their half lot on Dubuque street, but in order to do so legally they had to secure legislative permission. An act was passed by the Iowa General Assembly giving them the right to sell the property given to them by the territorial government, January 8, 1844, the proceeds to be used by the society for a church elsewhere in the city. It was approved February 4, 1876 and signed by John H. Gear, Speaker of the House, J. G. Newbold, President of the Senate and Samuel J. Kirkwood, Governor.¹¹²

At a parish meeting February 12th, they voted to sell all of their property on Dubuque Street and mortgage any other property if necessary in order to clear the church of debt. J. N. Seydel was commissioned to negotiate the sales. They received a total of \$10,882.50 from sales or rents. Their outstanding debts amounted to sixty-one hundred dollars.¹¹³

The Rev. Legrand Powers succeeded Miss Chapin for a short time and the Rev. James Eastwood was the pastor in 1878. From 1874 -1878 the records are scant and do not reveal

¹¹¹ Ibid., p. 93.

¹¹² Ibid., p. 98.

¹¹³ Ibid., p. 99.

a thriving parish. On August 25, 1878 a significant meeting was held in the church with J. N. Clark presiding.

The Rev. Oscar Clute addressed the group on a proposition he had to present to them. The following agreement was made:

"The trustees of the first Universalist Church of Iowa City agree with the American Unitarian Association of Boston, Massachusetts for cooperative work, I- Provided that the American Unitarian Association will put an able and educated missionary into the place and pay \$1,200 per year toward his salary for a period of five years so that the religious services of the church shall be continuous for that time except in needful vacations. We, Trustees of the Universalist Church of Iowa City, will pay the balance of the salary of the missionary, will provide the church building for that time without rent and meet all other needful local expenses and will make earnest efforts to secure a congregation, accepting the minister sent as our pastor with the right reserved to counsel with the A.U.A. as to the fitness of their missionary for the position and expecting that he shall be such a liberal man as would easily unite fair minded Unitarians and Universalists.

II- The organization of the First Universalist Church of Iowa City shall not be affected by this agreement nor the property thereof, but during the time of this agreement the Unitarian minister and two members of the congregation with three members and the president of said Trustees shall constitute an Executive Committee to raise such funds to pay current expenses of said religious services and conduct all matters of finance so far as the usual-practical religious work of the congregation is concerned.

III- By this agreement the Unitarians and Universalists of Iowa City mutually unite their efforts and their means to propagate those doctrines of religion by the efforts of minister and congregation, which are commonly known as liberal Christianity."114

The Universalist Society agreed in desiring to call the Rev. Oscar Clute as pastor. They pledged six hundred dollars toward his salary and promised to try to increase their portion to eight hundred the following

114

Ibid., pp. 105-107.

year.¹¹⁵

No doubt this cooperative plan was welcomed because of their poor financial status and their inability to get a satisfactory pastor. They had used wisdom in choosing the site for their new church building. It was on Clinton Avenue facing west and the State Capitol Building, now the main part of the University Campus. Unfortunately they had planned somewhat extravagantly. In 1878 they voted to complete the building, letting the contract September 11, 1880, for finishing the tower, to Sheetz & Gesberg & Co. for \$865.¹¹⁶

From 1878 to 1880 they had a joint organization, there were nine members on the Board of Trustees, only four of whom were Universalists. In December, 1879 the five members of the official board who were not Universalists asked for a reorganization and the dropping of the Winchester Profession of Faith. The letter regarding this read

"To the Trustees of the Universalist Church of Iowa City, December 29, 1879. In accepting a place on the board we wish to make the following statements. (1) We believe that an intimate union of all the liberal forces of this parish is essential to its spiritual welfare. (2) We believe that tests of fellowship should be more general and less specific. Should aim to express less and not more than the belief of those who join in fellowship; for one may believe as much more than a creed expresses as he is able, but cannot believe less and honestly subscribe to the creed, (3) While we as outside parties prefer our individual support to our common cause, we cannot accept for ourselves the Winchester Creed as such is probably

115

Ibid., pp. 107-108.

116

Ibid., p. 127.

the case with a large proportion of the church attendants, we believe the time has come for taking preliminary steps for re-organization of the church and parish. This opinion, we believe finds justification in the facts and nature of the case, as well as in the action of the Parish meeting in electing, notwithstanding their protests, several trustees known not to be in sympathy with the Winchester Creed. (4) In accepting the position of trustees, we are acting in accordance with the opinions above expressed, and we believe we would not otherwise be justified in accepting a position on the board. (Signed) P. H. Philbrick, President; A. C. Youkin, J. J. Dietz, C. A. Eggert and W. H. Taylor."

Apparently the four who were Universalists disagreed so they withdrew from the cooperative plan and thereafter maintained a separate organization and rented the church to the Unitarians.¹¹⁷

In March, 1893 they still owed one thousand six hundred dollars on the mortgage to E. A. Brown. They advertised the last of the Dubuque property for sale but whether that liquidated their indebtedness there was no record.¹¹⁸

In 1892 they discussed deeding their property to the State Convention. On November 16, 1896 the following members of the Board, J. Norwood Clark, M. N. Seydell, Eugene Paine, Mrs. Sarah A. Meyers and H. H. Jones met with S. J. Oldfield, the treasurer of the Iowa Universalist Convention. The latter had been sent by Judge Ayers, the president, to receive the trust deed. The Board unanimously voted to convey it to him.¹¹⁹

117

Ibid., p. 108.

118

Ibid., p. 140.

119

Ibid., p. 141.

Two years later the state convention sold it to the Iowa Unitarian Association who had supplied the church with a minister from 1878 to 1898.¹²⁰ The mission then of the liberal church did not end in Iowa City in 1898, the Unitarians are still carrying the liberal torch. Many of the Universalists no doubt identified themselves with its work.

Manchester

Manchester, like Iowa City, was in the throes of building in 1870. The former had begun work May 10, 1869 and completed it May 7, 1871 at a total cost of eight thousand thirty dollars and forty-four cents. The dedicatory services were conducted by the Rev. J. W. Hanson of Chicago.¹²¹ The Rev. H. L. F. Gillespie can remember his mother and Uncle Henry Barker attending and making a contribution.¹²² The first regular pastor was the Rev. E. R. Wood who came in September, 1871 and remained for two years. The Rev. W. J. Hicks served both Strawberry Point and this church every alternate Sunday for six months. For three years thereafter the society was inactive, except for the ladies group which induced the Rev. Mr. Wood to return and reorganize the church June 4, 1877. Their membership at that time was twenty-three and the officers were: President,

¹²⁰

I.U.C., President's Notebook.

¹²¹

History of Delaware County, Iowa, Chicago, 1878, p.503.

¹²²

Rev. H. L. F. Gillespie, Manchester, Ia., to Elva Tucker, 1943.

S. W. Green; Clerk, R. W. Tirrill; Treasurer, Mary Hoag; Trustees, E. S. Congar, Adaline Tomlinson, and Seth Brown. The church was out of debt and in a good condition.¹²³

The Rev. E. R. Wood remained until November 1, 1878, when there was a disagreement among the members. The Rev. Mr. Gillespie wrote that they had a Sunday School of one hundred at the time they closed. During the next twelve years there was no regular pastor. The Rev. Amos Crum and others preached occasionally from 1885 - 1890.

"The Church building was donated for academic school from 1879 to 1885. In 1879 the basement was put in. In 1885 the building was rented to the school board for public school purposes for which it was used until 1889. In 1885 the basement was repaired.

"At the beginning of the Rev. Matt Wing's pastorate in 1890 the church building was repaired through out and improved in many ways at a cost of about \$2300.00 including four handsome memorial windows which were paid for by individuals.

"In October 1891 [the] Rev. [Mr.] Wing removed to Minneapolis and [the] Rev. H. O. Sommers was engaged. His pastorate lasted but six months at which time [the] Rev. S. L. [Mrs.] Crum, as state missionary, began regular services every alternate Sunday. She continued to do so until November 1892. In the spring of 1893 [the] Rev. W. F. Smith became the resident pastor preaching on alternate Sundays in connection with Strawberry Point and Greeley. This arrangement continued ten months. In the spring of 1894 Rev. W. A. Render, a licentiate, recently a Y. M. C. A. Secretary of Marshalltown, began regular services at the suggestion of Amos Crum and continued with good satisfaction for three months. On the first Sunday of October 1894 [the] Rev. Eliza Curtis, a graduate of Lombard University, began a pastorate which continued with much success and satisfaction for two years. During the month of March 1897, [the] Rev. J. E. Keyes, an evangelist, held a series of revival meetings in the church under the direction of [the] Rev. Henry Gillespie. At the close of these meetings [the] Rev. T. E. Dotter

123

History of Delaware County, Iowa, op. cit., p. 503.

began his pastorate, the first Sunday in April 1897."¹²⁴ It was he and Seth Brown who collected all of this historical data and placed it in the church record books for there were no annual meetings recorded from 1877, the date of their re-organization, to June 28, 1897.

Unfortunately, the Rev. Mr. Dotter became ill and was compelled to resign. His wife the Rev. Mabel Dotter continued the services until April 1, 1899 after which the Sabbath School was continued until July 1st at which time the church was again closed.¹²⁵ The Rev. Mr. Dotter was a conscientious and capable leader who was also a good business manager of parish affairs, just what this church needed. After about twenty years of irregular services and intermittent leadership they needed a long and successful pastorate to give them security and stability.

Marshalltown

By 1879 the Universalists of Marshalltown were meeting in Whitton Hall and the Rev. I. A. Eberhart was leading this expanding parish.¹²⁶ During that fall their services were held in St. Matthew's Episcopal Church, commonly called the Stone Church.¹²⁷ During February 1880 there was a conference of Universalist ministers which was followed by a session of the Iowa Universalist Convention.

¹²⁴ The First Universalist Society of Manchester, Iowa, Secretary's Record, pp. 28-29.

¹²⁵ Ibid., p. 31.

¹²⁶ Marshalltown Republican, July 26, 1877.

¹²⁷ Marshalltown Weekly Republican, Oct. 29, 1879 - Feb. 4, 1880.

"The attendance was large and great enthusiasm was manifested." They raised four thousand dollars to buy the Episcopal Church of Lyman Cook of New York, who had foreclosed the mortgage. The Ladies Society gave one thousand two hundred dollars, the Belle Plaine parish under the leadership of their pastor, the Rev. J. H. Hoyt pledged two hundred dollars, Miss Mary Hartman's Bible Class contributed one hundred dollars.¹²⁸ Bishop Perry was unable to redeem the property so the Universalists paid one thousand dollars in cash and placed a mortgage on the building for three thousand, payable in four years, and received the deed in March, 1880.¹²⁹

In October, 1883 the Rev. Mr. Adams was closing his pastorate. "He is an able man and it will be hard to find his equal in point of real ability and fearless intellectual and moral courage."¹³⁰

The Board voted to call a new pastor, the Rev. J. F. Shindler in March of the following year.¹³¹ He was a true Christian who won the respect and admiration of the entire community by practicing his faith - the brotherhood of man. In August of 1885, James Pelletier, a destitute man with a wife and two small children died, Rev. Shindler learned of the situation, spent Wednesday stating the sad

128

Ibid., Feb. 11 & 18, 1880.

129

Ibid., March 17, 1880.

130

Marshalltown Times - Republican, Oct. 25, 1883.

131

Ibid., March 27, 1884.

plight of the widow and babies and asking for funds to bury the man and care for his family. He secured thirty-seven dollars which was considered enough for a simple internment and a small portion besides. The Times Republican remarked that "Mr. Shindler's labors ... evinced a kindness that our people will remember."¹³²

His own baby daughter died that fall and he must have resigned his pastorate within the year. In December, 1886 the Rev. James Gorton of Michigan was sent by the State Convention to establish regular services.¹³³ How long he remained is not known for the papers of 1887, 1888 and 1889 carried no notices. In 1890 the Rev. J. H. Palmer appeared before the commissioners in regard to the Universalists having a fair showing regarding the services at the Soldiers Home. He must have been either the part time or full time pastor to have taken this action, for an appeal for such an opportunity would be pointless unless he had been in a position to render that service. On Easter Sunday a number of people united with the church and some children were dedicated.¹³⁴

In 1893 the Rev. John Edward Keyes was their pastor. One news item carried this comment. He "addressed a splendid audience in his well known manner."¹³⁵ In July

¹³² Ibid., August 6, 1885.

¹³³ Ibid., Dec. 2, 1886.

¹³⁴ Ibid., Feb. 20, & April 10, 1890.

¹³⁵ Ibid., July 27, 1893.

1894 the church and Sunday School went to the Soldier's Home at eight forty-five on a Friday morning. They were asked to bring one lemon, lunch for two meals and street car fare. Apparently it was the annual picnic for the whole parish.¹³⁶

For the next two years there were items in the newspaper concerning the election of officers for the young people at the pastor's home, church socials, ladies meetings and Sunday School picnics,¹³⁷ which gave the impression of an active and thriving parish. There were either no usable paper files or no regular notices for the rest of the story is unknown. In 1900 they were credited with a church membership of one hundred but that was the last year they were represented in the Convention. Shortly after the turn of the century they appeared to disband and their church home was sold.

Mitchellville

An historical sketch that appeared in the Mitchellville News published by E. T. Cressey in 1880, states that the Society was organized in 1860 in Old Mitchell. From 1870 to 1877 Rev. J. R. Sage was the minister. The "Rev. A. Vedder then came on to the field as pastor, and continued up to the first Sabbath in October, when he preached his farewell discourse." It was he who directed the parish in

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Ibid., July 19, 1893.

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Ibid., March 6, 1896 - June 30, 1896.

its organization. "The Rev. Mrs. S. M. [Fidelia] Gillette becomes the pastor and preaches morning and evening of each alternate Sabbath, at a salary of \$500 a year." The church was organized January 13, 1878; just ten years after the building was erected.

The officers of the society were: Chairman, Thomas Mitchell; trustees, N. W. Cram, L. W. Cannon, William Jones, D. P. Oldfield, Thomas Mitchell; Clerk and Treasurer, S. J. Oldfield. Prof. E. Chase was Superintendent of the Sunday School.¹³⁸

Around 1870 the Methodists were holding their meetings in the Universalist meeting house on two Sabbath evenings each month, their minister was supplying three stations, Altoona, Rising Sun, and Mitchellville. I can recall hearing that all the denominations used the Universalist Church for services since it was for a time the only church building in town.

The Secretary's records show that the Universalists met January 13th to organize a church. The permanent organization was completed January 27th, 1878 when the following officers were chosen:¹³⁹ Moderator, Thomas Mitchell; Clerk, E. B. Stall; Treasurer, Sister Tillie Mitchell; Deacons, Bro. Wm. S. Jones, Bro. A. Rothrock and Sister Pauline Weeks. March 17th they adopted a constitution and by-laws after hearing the preaching by Rev. A. Vedder.

¹³⁸ Mitchellville Index, Sept. 1926.

¹³⁹ The First Universalist Church in Mitchellville, Polk County, Iowa, Clerk's Record, Vol. 1, p. 21.

The first year thirteen members were admitted; they resided in six different communities showing that Universalists were thinly scattered throughout this section of the state.¹⁴⁰

From 1879 to 1881 the Rev. F. W. Gillette was the shepherdess. She observed Children's Day, June 15, 1879.¹⁴¹ From 1881 to March 1890 there was no record of church activities. On the twenty-third Rev. T. W. Woodrow preached and a meeting was held for the purpose of reorganization. The new members, who were received, were to become mainstays of the church in the coming half-century; S. J. Oldfield, Gertrude Hedges, Lucy E. Patterson, Mrs. Jane Sternberg, G. W. Griffiths, Ida Seems, Louisa C. Means and B. F. Rothrock. The officers chosen were, Moderator, Thomas Mitchell; Clerk, B. F. Rothrock; Treasurer, S. J. Oldfield; Deaconess, Mrs. R. B. Patterson.¹⁴² In 1891 C. L. Henney became the clerk, and thereafter, he and his wife were active in serving the society until they passed away at the close of rich and busy lives.

The Rev. Mr. Woodrow remained for at least two years. In 1892 the Rev. Amos Crum served both this church and Webster City, simultaneously for four years. On July 18, 1894, he conducted a memorial service for Bro. Thomas Mitchell and Sister Mary Ball. The former had been a pioneer

¹⁴⁰ Ibid., Vol. 1, p. 22.

¹⁴¹ Ibid., Vol. 1, p. 23.

¹⁴² Ibid., Vol. 1, p. 25.

leader in Polk County, founding Apple Grove, Mitchell and later Mitchellville. It was he who invited and entertained the Universalist ministers as early as the 1850's. He organized, led, and supported the church. As well as giving the land for the Mitchellville Cemetery, he founded the Mitchell Seminary which was opened in September, 1872 and which was active a little more than a decade. His death was a severe blow to this little village church but there seemed to be others who could and did carry on the torch of a liberal faith. In August of that same year they entertained the State Convention. Committees met trains at the D. V. Depot, R. I. Depot and the one at Santiago; and canvassed the town for rooms for the delegates.

Dr. Crum resigned the pastorate November 29, 1896 because of his failing health. C. L. Henney wrote, "Our homes were all touched and strengthened by his Christian gentleness, his kindly acts and his warm hearted friendship. His polished handicraft in the making of Christian life and character will be manifest in the lives of his little flock all the way through the rugged road of life."¹⁴³

Louis Tucker made the motion that the Rev. J. E. Keyes should be engaged as pastor.¹⁴⁴ After about seven months he resigned, but the resolution of acceptance regretted the severance of a fellowship of nearly five years. He must have been doing some work there while Dr. Crum was

¹⁴³

Ibid., Vol. 1, p. 46.

¹⁴⁴

Ibid., Vol. 1, p. 48.

the pastor.

Upon the motion of Thomas Tomlinson and Robert Ball, the Rev. John Hughes of Bloomfield was called January 9, 1898. He was to come one Sunday in the month and receive a salary of twenty dollars. In November of that year they held a series of meetings and the Rev. Kate Hughes was also present. This would indicate that the Hughes' never resided in Mitchellville.¹⁴⁵

The Rev. W. H. Williams preached there Jan. 15, 1899, which may indicate that he was the pastor at that time. Resolutions were passed in memory of Sister Mathilda Murray "who had ever given her loyal help and loyal service as well as liberal financial aid to the church, Sunday School, and young peoples union as well as to the cause in general ... with an unselfish and devoted heart and hand."¹⁴⁶

April 22nd, 1900 they met immediately after Sunday School and employed the Rev. Harry Richardson of Marshalltown. He was to receive sixteen dollars and twenty-cents per Sunday, but there seemed some doubt that the parish could meet this obligation. Tillie Mitchell, Stephen Daniels, and C. L. Henney were appointed to solicit the necessary funds.

During this period the pastor apparently was serving several churches and did not reside in this small Iowa village, except during the time when the academy was active.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid., Vol. 1, pp. 56 & 57.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid., Vol. 1, p. 59.

It is unusual that in such a small community there were enough liberal thinkers to support a church. When Mr. Mitchell passed away they lost an outstanding leader whose counsel, prestige and financial aid were irreplaceable. In similar circumstances other societies lost heart and quit. Other strong members remained in Mitchellville and another generation was growing up who would carry on the work steadily and courageously.

Mt. Pleasant

This pioneer society in eastern Iowa continued to keep its doors open and proclaim the truth as this small but vigorous band understood it. It was by 1900 the oldest active Universalist church in Iowa. James Throop said in 1898 when they were celebrating the fiftieth anniversary of the Mt. Pleasant Church, "The parish is composed of excellent material; and, while few in numbers, have always exercised a potent influence in the community and maintained their corporate existence as a religious organization amid varying fortunes for half a century."¹⁴⁷

Unfortunately, they were never financially able to employ and retain the services of an able minister for an extended term of service. However they were never for a protracted period without a part time pastor. The Rev. J. W. Chaffin resigned in May, 1870. The Rev. C. P. Nash was called in September but he apparently did not accept for in

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First Universalist Church of Mt. Pleasant, Iowa,
Secretary's Record, Vol. 7, p. 69.

November the Rev. W. S. Ralph was extended a call at a salary of twelve hundred dollars.¹⁴⁸ One year later he resigned and the parish regretfully accepted, "on account of present indebtedness and our unfavorable prospects financially, we feel unable adequately to compensate him for future services."¹⁴⁹

For more than a year they had occasional services, the Rev. W. R. Cole preached for three months, the Rev. Mr. Brinkerhoof, Dr. J. W. Hanson, and the Rev. J. H. Ballou were guests of the parish. March 16, 1873 the Rev. Prudy, Le Clerc was employed for one service and a vacation of six or eight weeks at a salary of eight hundred dollars. Apparently they were having trouble with back-sliders, because a resolution was passed that fall wherein they pledged themselves to be regular and punctual in attendance and to cooperate with the members and the pastor.¹⁵¹ March 28, 1875 the Rev. Miss LeClerc tendered her resignation because of ill health.¹⁵²

October 1, 1875, the Rev. J. R. Sage was called at a salary of twenty dollars per Sunday and he was to come on alternate Sundays.¹⁵³ They were sharing his pastoral

148

Ibid., Vol. 1, p. 104.

149

Ibid., Vol. 1, p. 111.

150

Ibid., Vol. 1, p. 151.

151

Ibid., Vol. 1, p. 153.

152

Ibid., Vol. 1, p. 160.

153

Ibid., Vol. 1, p. 171.

services with the church at Mitchellville, where he resided and was the principal of the Mitchell Seminary. This arrangement lasted one year.

For about two years they were without a pastor again. The Rev. O. F. Van Cise, reared in this church, preached their Christmas sermon in 1878.¹⁵⁴ September 7, 1879 the Rev. B. F. Rogers was engaged for half time services. They rejoiced that he could reside among them.¹⁵⁵ His pastorate was closed in January 1881.¹⁵⁶ The Rev. H. W. Smith of Portland, Michigan accepted a call and then asked to be released because his congregation in Portland requested him to remain.¹⁵⁷ The Rev. E. L. Briggs preached three fourths of the time from January to September, 1884 while he was living in Wilton Junction. The church decided that they appreciated his services

"yet in view of the fact that he is unable to live among us and give us the benefit of his constant pastoral care, and in view of our needs in this regard, and our limited ability, and the difficulty if not impossibility, under such disadvantages of rendering adequate compensation we feel compelled to dispense, for the present with his ministerial services, which we do with regret."¹⁵⁸

The Rev. Herbert Whitney coming from Storm Lake, commenced preaching December 28, 1884. He was called for

¹⁵⁴ Ibid., Vol. 1, p. 181.

¹⁵⁵ Ibid., Vol. 1, p. 202.

¹⁵⁶ Ibid., Vol. 1, p. 207.

¹⁵⁷ Ibid., Vol. 1, p. 218.

¹⁵⁸ Ibid., Vol. 1, p. 224.

the coming year in February at a salary of six hundred dollars. In September Mrs. Whitney agreed to complete her husband's pastorate so that he would then be free to engage elsewhere.¹⁵⁹ From 1886 - 1890 they were without a minister but visiting preachers held occasional services, the society was active and at least sixteen were admitted to membership.¹⁶⁰ December 14, 1890 Professor John Clarence Lee, from Lombard College, Galesburg, Illinois, preached his first sermon in Mt. Pleasant. It was the beginning of a very prosperous four year pastorate ending June 19, 1894. Services were held on alternate Sundays. He "received thirty members into the church and dedicated twenty-five children and left us in much better condition than he found us." He was greatly loved and esteemed by the people of this church.¹⁶¹

In October of 1894 the Rev. J. E. Keyes conducted a series of meetings. "He had a crowded house nearly every night." One hundred twenty-six dollars was accumulated through a musicale and the collections. Seventeen were received into the church membership. The parish tendered their "sincere thanks to Brother Keyes for his faithful and devoted service during the series of meetings held here, also for the beautiful singing, which was an inspiration to all who heard it."¹⁶² He became their regular pastor in

¹⁵⁹ Ibid., Vol. 1, p. 226.

¹⁶⁰ Ibid., Vol. 2, pp. 10-22.

¹⁶¹ Ibid., Vol. 2, p. 35.

¹⁶² Ibid., Vol. 2, p. 39.

December, coming every two weeks for a salary of thirty dollars.¹⁶³ He remained for two years, resigning January 5, 1897.

The Rev. E. H. Chapin of Galesburg, Illinois was called as pastor in the beginning of the year 1897, preaching his first sermon February 21st.¹⁶⁴ In 1899 they employed the Rev. W. D. Buchanan to preach every other Sunday for seven hundred dollars.¹⁶⁵ He was a capable young man just recently married and the future of this little red brick church looked bright under his guidance.

By 1899 the charter members of this parish were slipping away, one by one to their well earned reward. The names of M. L. Edwards, Rebecca Leedham, George Craft, and Father Schreiner appeared no more. From 1848 - 1887 M. L. Edwards was always an officer and generally he was the clerk of the parish until his death. By 1899 there appears less variety in the names of the officers giving the impression that there were fewer leaders in the little band or the "old guard", so to speak, were hesitant in trusting the newer members with responsibility. The officers in 1899 were: Trustees, L. F. Willard, I. P. Van Cise, Mrs. A. W. Orton; Treasurer, George E. Throop; Financial Secretary, Frank Throop; Clerk, Anna Leedham; Organist, Anna

163

Ibid., Vol. 2, p. 40.

164

Ibid., Vol. 2, p. 55.

165

Ibid., Vol. 2, p. 79.

Leedham; Moderator, James A. Throop.¹⁶⁶

The Women's Industrial Society which had previously been so active must have become dormant for

"In 1875 a group of the women belonging to the church met and reorganized the Aid Society The original members were Alamedia Ross, Mrs. Ann Throop, Mrs. Mildred Rand, Mrs. Rebecca Leedham, Mrs. Angelina Palmer, Mrs. Maria Schreiner, Mrs. Amelia Wait. This society did not meet regularly but when they did come together they seemed to accomplish a great deal. When the society met at the different homes, the hostess furnished work for them to do and then paid the grand sum of five cents each to add to the treasury.

"In 1870 the trustees invited the society to pay one hundred dollars towards the minister's salary and from that time on they helped pay for carpets, fuel and other things connected with the church. The records of this time have not been preserved but the ladies kept on at work, we all know. In 1896 an invitation went out from Mrs. Mary Van Cise to all women interested in the church, and the society was reorganized with Mrs. Van Cise as president and the younger women as officers. There was a pastor only part time and it was not easy to keep the interest - but occasionally they had meetings and stood ready to do anything to help."¹⁶⁷

"Long before other churches had social groups for young people, some young men and women of this church formed a club known as the Centenary Social, meeting one year, 1870-71 for the purpose of raising a gift of money to celebrate the Centenary of Universalism in the United States."¹⁶⁸
On February 23, 1870 they elected Eliza Throop, president; L. F. Willard, Vice-president; Isabel A. Ross, Secretary and I. P. Van Cise, Treasurer. George Throop, O. Griffith

¹⁶⁶

Ibid., Vol. 2, p. 71.

¹⁶⁷

History of the Industrial Society of the First Universalist Church of Mt. Pleasant, Iowa, 1938, (Ms.).

¹⁶⁸

Laura Bowman Galer, Church Clubs - First Universalist Church, of Mt. Pleasant, Iowa, 1938, (Ms.).

and Maria Van Cise recommended the name ^{for the society.} They planned excellent literary programs, raised money for the minister's salary and in 1871 purchased a church bell from the United Presbyterians and presented it to the Universalist Church.¹⁶⁹ Incidentally there were five weddings among the twenty-five members the first year.

Leroy Palmer who had been a member of this club wrote in after years,

"To sum up the spirit of our little organization, I think it would be fair to say of it, that it was liberal religion socially applied and practiced, and in the largeness of its welcome and freedom from sectarian tests, was open to the membership of any to whom innocent human happiness, real reverence for the essential truths of Jesus, and limitless intellectual freedom of thought might appeal. Its membership, as I recall it, was not confined in any exclusive way to the Universalist Church but that its center and very life was in that church, must also be said."

They had dances in their homes and sometimes freely attended circuses and theaters, which many good folk "viewed with alarm". It was a "joyous, happy, free-hearted association" which supplied recreation that could not then be obtained commercially. They set out to improve the books in the library and so working with the Universalist General Publishing House they obtained the Alcott books, Dickens, Thackeray, Scott, George Eliot, Mrs. Humphreys Ward and Edmand Eggleston.

"I think we had perhaps what I may call a healthy, strong appetite for music, that had not been cloyed by satiety. We played and sang because we longed to play and sing.

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First Universalist Church of Mt. Pleasant Iowa,
Centenary Social Club, Secretary's Record, p. 42.

"Of course there were other parts of the program of the Centennial Social beside the song parts, there were readings from Dickens, and recitations from the poets, and there were charades, - charades. I wonder if this generation ever saw a charade? And the old cotillion or square dances with their 'Choose your partners', 'Balance all', 'Allerman Left', 'Grand right and left', 'All promenade'. I wonder if our children ever saw one."¹⁷⁰

"A successor to this Club was the Murray Club, one of the really fine clubs for young people in Mt. Pleasant in a day when bridge, movies and swing were as yet beyond the imagination. For twenty years, from 1880 - 1900 a group of older young folks met in the homes for programs of music and literature, games and plays. They gave money to the church also, but were primarily a club of like-minded men and women out for a sane good time."¹⁷¹

They planned two excursions to Ft. Madison, clearing over one hundred seventy dollars, purchased the pipe organ, installed the gas lights and purchased the pulpit chairs.¹⁷²

The Young Peoples Christian Union was organized February 15, 1891 while Professor Lee was the pastor. There were twenty-four charter members. The first officers were, Fred Wait, President; Olive Cole, Vice President; Viola Dugdale, Secretary; and Grace Roberts, Treasurer. Before the year was out they had ten more members. In 1895 they entertained the Sixth Annual Convention of the Y.P.C.U. of Iowa, which was in the youthful days of Herbert L. Stoughton of Osage, a larger gathering than the State Convention of Universalists. They bought a carpet for the church, did the janitor work and were responsible for the music for the

¹⁷⁰ Leroy Palmer, Washington, D. C., to Mrs. Sylvia Wait, Mt. Pleasant, Iowa, June 19, 1924.

¹⁷¹ Laura B. Galer, op. cit.

¹⁷² First Universalist Church of Mt. Pleasant, Iowa, Murray Club, Secretary's Record.

regular church services besides holding regular devotional meetings.¹⁷³

The Sunday School begun so wisely in the early days continued to function almost interruptedly. There were twelve teachers in 1872, fourteen in 1879. In the 1870's the average attendance was sixty-five and in the 1880's it was seventy-five.¹⁷⁴

"In 1870 they collected seventy-five dollars to buy books for the church library,"¹⁷⁵ perhaps in cooperation with the Centenary Club when they were trying to improve the quality of the books. Jessie Griffith Montgomery can recall "Standing against the back wall was a high old fashioned book case, with a capacity of perhaps three or four hundred volumes. This was our circulating library" ¹⁷⁶ Mrs. Edith Willitts says boys and girls came there to Sunday School so they could borrow the books.¹⁷⁷

"In my growing up", wrote Emma Wait, "there was that wonderful library and Frank Throop was a hustling librarian. I read every book over and over."¹⁷⁸

¹⁷³ The First Universalist Church of Mt. Pleasant, Iowa, Y.P.C.U., Secretary's Record, no page numbers.

¹⁷⁴ The First Universalist Church of Mt. Pleasant, Iowa, Sunday School Secretarial Record.

¹⁷⁵ Laura B. Galer, Our Church School, First Universalist Church of Mt. Pleasant, Iowa, (Ms.).

¹⁷⁶ Jessie Griffith Montgomery, Chicago, to some one in the Mt. Pleasant Church, Nov. 21, 1938.

¹⁷⁷ An interview with Edith Willitts, Mt. Pleasant, Iowa.

¹⁷⁸ Emma Wait to Mrs. Fred Wait, 1923.

Newton

The church at Newton was served by the Reverends Woodbury, C. P. Nash and J. R. Sage. The latter served as pastor while he was the principal of the Mitchell Seminary in Mitchellville.

About 1873 or ¹⁸74 the "Rev. D. H. Rogan, who had been pastor of the Congregational Society, having modified his opinions, resigned his charge and engaged for a time in another calling." About 1876 "he began to hold independent services in the Universalist church, which were attended by the members of that society [who were pastorless] and by several members of the Congregational faith. This led to a unity of organization among his hearers, who joined ... to employ Mr. Rogan as a settled pastor." They remodeled and redecorated the interior of the church and removed the old steeple, "which was a leaky and damaging affair." Their trustees were O. G. Drew, Henry Kissel, Albert Harrah, S. N. Lindley and John Long.¹⁷⁹

Mr. J. H. Fugard of Newton says the new church was called the "Union Church". "It did well for several years. A Col. Fox and his wife of Des Moines served as pastors after Mr. Rogan had accepted a call to a large church in Illinois. S. C. Cook was a leading member of the new organization."¹⁸⁰ Mr. Fugard thought the group discontinued services in 1876 but that was about the time Rev. Rogan

¹⁷⁹ History of Jasper County, Iowa, Chicago, 1878, p. 466.

¹⁸⁰ J. H. Fugard, an attorney at law, Newton, Iowa, to Dr. Effie McCollum Jones, Webster City, Iowa, 1930.

began the fusion society of Universalists and Liberal Congregationalists.

In 1882 they were last represented¹⁸¹ in the State Convention. Four years later the property was sold to the United Presbyterians whose present building stands where stood the old Universalist church. Many of their members found a church home with the Congregational Society.¹⁸²

Osage

In 1870 the Osage society was one year old. The first officers were: Moderator, Arad Hitchcock; Clerk, Pascal Whitney; Treasurer, S. W. Hastings; Standing committee, H. L. and G. H. Knowlton. "At the close of the first year the Rev. H. P. Smith was re-engaged for another year and meetings were then held in the old school building."¹⁸³ He wrote to the Secretary of State, "Enclosed is the certificate of Incorporation of the First Universalist Society in Osage, Iowa which the law requires shall be recorded in the office of the Secretary of State."¹⁸⁴ "At the close of his second year the Rev. Mr. Smith moved to Kansas and no services were held for a year, when Rev. [J. H.] Ballou was engaged for a year and services were held in the Court House and in the hall belonging to Woods and Hastings."¹⁸⁵ A

¹⁸¹ I.U.C., President's Notebook (compiled by Dr. F. J. Drake.)

¹⁸² History of Jasper County, Iowa, Indianapolis, 1912, p. 182.

¹⁸³ Mitchell County Press, December 30, 1897.

¹⁸⁴ Rev. W. P. Smith, Osage, Iowa to the Iowa Secretary of State, June 25, 1870.

¹⁸⁵ Mitchell County Press, December 30, 1897.

Thanksgiving service was conducted November 27, 1873 where Rev. Ballou read a long commemorative poem of which he was the author. The last stanza read thus:

"Then lift the gates, unfold the portal,
Opening Zion's Courts of praise,
Let the songs of souls immortal
Bless the grace that crowns our days;
Bless the fountain of all blessing,
Every joy of life confessing,
Faith, and hope, and love expressing,
In the anthem that we raise."¹⁸⁶

The "Rev. [Mr.] Ballou remained two years and before he left arrangements were made to build a church."¹⁸⁷ In December 1874 they had raised four thousand dollars for their building and G. M. Stoughton, Sidney Hastings, and Charles Sweeney were appointed as the building committee.¹⁸⁸ The church was begun in the summer of 1877 on lot 2 and the east one-half of lot three in block 169 of Osage. The cost of the church and the lot was five thousand five hundred dollars. In March, 1879 it was dedicated by Dr. Balch assisted by Dr. Hanson, the Rev. Mr. Gouch, the Rev. Mr. Eldrich and the Rev. Miss Kollock.¹⁸⁹

"The services of [the] Rev. [B. F.] Bowles [were] next secured and at the time of his pastorate there were thirty-three members. Since the completion of the church building, services have been held the greater part of the time. Among the pastors were^[the] Reverends [H.] Slade, [A. A.]

¹⁸⁶ Rev. J. H. Ballou, Thanksgiving Service, 1873, p. 8.

¹⁸⁷ Ibid., p. 8.

¹⁸⁸ First Universalist Society of Osage, Iowa, Secretary's Record, Vol. I, p. 27.

¹⁸⁹ Mitchell County Press, (Osage) Dec. 30, 1897.

Thayer, [A. C.] Grier, [A. K.] Beem and [J. L.] Everton."¹⁹⁰

The Society record reveals that the Mr. Rev. Slade was reelected the pastor in 1879 at an annual salary of nine hundred dollars. Two years later the Rev. C. T. Irish came for one year at a salary of seven hundred dollars. The Rev. Aaron A. Thayer began his pastorate in August, 1883, and his compensation was six hundred dollars. It was during his pastorate that Pascal Whitney, a charter member passed away. The resolution in his honor read:

"That the Church, in the death of Pascal Whitney, has lost one of its purest and most honored members; that the society has lost an example which the world would do well to copy; that our citizens have parted with a friend whose lips spoke no guile; and that his family have parted with a benefactor, whose character was unsullied, whose memory is fragrant and whose loss is inestimable."¹⁹¹

It would seem that the children or some members of the congregation were not conducting themselves properly during the worship hour. Herbert Stoughton could recall crawling under the seats during the church services. Perhaps this entry concerns such a situation, "After a free expression of views it seemed to be the unanimous opinion of the members present that worshippers in the public assembly should assume a proper attitude of devotion during the service of prayer."¹⁹²

During the Rev. Mr. Thayer's pastorate they had

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Ibid.

¹⁹¹

First Universalist Society of Osage, Iowa, Secretary's Record, Vol. 1, pp. 29-33.

¹⁹²

First Universalist Church of Osage, Iowa, Secretary's Record, Vol. 1, p. 14.

considerable financial difficulty. They could not raise the six hundred dollars necessary for the minister's salary and funds for the operating expenses. In 1889 they suspended services until they could pay all of their bills. May 1st, 1890 their minister resigned. Doubtless their financial difficulties delayed the calling of a new pastor. Two years later in March, 1892 they wrote Rev. A. K. Beem of Ohio an invitation. In the fall they voted to build a parsonage. Mrs. Cordelia Stoughton, W. F. Boynton and Charles Sweeney were appointed to serve on the building committee. It cost them one thousand thirty-three dollars not counting donated labor and materials. The Rev. Mr. Beem was offered a salary of one thousand dollars; one hundred eighty was to be paid by the Otranto Church and one hundred twenty would be deducted for rent on the parsonage for his second year.¹⁹³

From 1898 to 1900 during the Rev. J. Leroy Everton pastorate this church enjoyed the greatest prosperity of its entire history. All the auxiliaries were very active and they were able to pay him in full when he resigned. He was married to ^{the} Rev. Eliza Curtis the pastor at Manchester while he was serving at Osage. This parish entertained the tenth annual convention of the State Y.P.C.U. in June, 1899. A score of towns were represented; Waterloo had the largest delegation, which was twelve. The officers chosen were: President, Harriet I. Baker, West Union; Vice President, H. B. Cropper, Waterloo; Secretary, H. L. Stoughton, Osage;

¹⁹³
Ibid., ^{Vol. 1,} pp. 39 to 64.

Treasurer, Miss Josephine Leedham, Mt. Pleasant; State organizer, Clara Daley, Charles City. The ministers present were Dr. Q. H. Shinn, Dr. ^{Amos} Crum, the Rev. A. R. Tillinghast, the Rev. G. E. Cunningham (Missouri), the Rev. L. C. Esperson, Dr. Perrin (Missionary to Japan), Dr. C. Elwood Nash, the Rev. A. J. Torsleff, the Rev. J. L. Everton, the Rev. Harriet I. Baker. There were doctrinal sermons, discussions, papers and missionary talks. It lasted four days and gave the impression that it was a splendid Convention.¹⁹⁴

After the record of twenty-nine charter members there were no membership records until 1892 when two were received. In the next eight years, forty-six were admitted to membership in the church.¹⁹⁵ The church was a growing organization spiritually, and that explains why they were able to pay a larger salary to their pastors. It also helps explain why Herbert Stoughton told ^{the} Rev. Jennie B. Hitchcock this was their "golden age".

Oskaloosa

In 1870 the Oskaloosa Universalist Church erected a small frame building valued at five hundred dollars. The church membership was forty-two and they had an average attendance of ninety in the Sunday School.¹⁹⁶ By 1883 the number of families associated with the group was only twenty less than two fifths of what there had been a decade

¹⁹⁴ Mitchell County Press (Osage), June 29, 1899.

¹⁹⁵ First Universalist Church of Osage, Iowa, Secretary's Record, Vol. 1, p. 9.

¹⁹⁶ Universalist Register and Almanac, Boston, 1873.

earlier. In the meantime the church property had doubled in value.¹⁹⁷ During the ensuing decade the group became dormant, and in 1895 the Iowa Convention sold the property for \$1,145 and dropped this parish from the record.¹⁹⁸

Red Oak

The Universalist Society at Red Oak was organized in 1869 two years after the one in Clarinda. Both communities were doubtless touched by the famous Universalist circuit rider, the Rev. Erasmus Manford. In 1863 the Rev. Fletcher Wilson was their pastor. The Rev. W. W. Merritt lived at Red Oak and served the southern portion of the state for many years. He was listed as their half-time pastor in 1873. The following year they had twenty-four members and thirty-five in attendance at their Sunday School. The group was never fellowshipped nor did they ever entertain the Convention. In 1897 at Bloomfield they were last officially represented at the stage gathering.¹⁹⁹

Strawberry Point

In 1870 Strawberry Point was without a pastor.

The Rev. Joy Bishop wrote,

"I have just heard that Bro. Adiorne has left you. What is the matter do tell me, is it with us preachers or is the trouble with the Society or both? What will you do for a preacher and what are they

¹⁹⁷ Ibid., 1883.

¹⁹⁸ Iowa Universalist Convention, Secretary's Record, Vol. 3, p. 245.

¹⁹⁹ I.U.C., President's Notebook, Universalist Companion and Almanac, Boston, 1863, Universalist Register and Almanac, Boston, 1873.

doing at Elkader, Greeley and how getting along at Manchester?"²⁰⁰

The Rev. J. W. Hicks came to reside at Strawberry Point and assumed the pastoral work at Elkader, Greeley and Manchester for a part of the next six years. These four seem to have been organized by the same minister and the pulpits supplied by the same man, for the same names appear on each record during their early history. No doubt these towns formed one of the organized circuits.

The Rev. Mr. Hicks appears to have been the last regular pastor. On May 8, 1881 the parish paid the balance of fifteen dollars due him. For three years they had been renting the church for alternate Sunday services, in 1878 to the Congregationalists for fifty dollars per annum, and the following year to a Rev. Sample's parish for seventy-five dollars for a period of six months. In 1882 they had a balance on hand of ninety-nine dollars and fifty cents and one quarter's rent was yet due from the Germans. They were not holding services and by 1887 they discontinued regular business meetings or else ceased recording them in the original clerk's record. At a special meeting they voted to deed their property to the State Convention - a penciled note recorded that it was not done.²⁰¹

200

Joy Bishop, Bedford, Iowa, to Peter Blake, Strawberry Point, Iowa, March, 1870.

201

First Universalist Church of Strawberry Point, Iowa, Clerk's Record, (no page numbers).

In 1887 the officers were, Trustees, P. M. Pease, P. Blake, and C. Bemis; Secretary, P. Blake; Treasurer, A. J. Pease.²⁰² There were about forty-four names inscribed beneath the constitution. In 1900 they reported a membership of twelve.

Although there are no available records of the church to prove they remained a distinct group until all of this generation passed on in the twentieth century, this was the case. The church property was retained, and the group met and regularly sent delegates to the Convention. They began as early as 1860 to attend the state meeting and continued to be represented throughout this period as well as sending delegates to the Turkey River Association which was still active in the seventies.²⁰³

Tipton

The Tipton Society was reorganized in March, 1871, under the ^{Rev} B. F. Snook as pastor, with forty members. A Sabbath School was also organized of about sixty members. The basis of this organization was the Winchester Confession of Faith, adopted by the General Convention in 1803. The trustees were Hon. C. P. Holden, H. Hammond, and Dr. H. H. Maynard; Jesse James was the Secretary.

"A lot was purchased from Jesse James, one block and a half southwest of the Court House Square, and a neat

202

Ibid.

203

Ibid.

wooden structure, sixty by thirty-two feet with a spire, was erected, at a cost of \$3,700." It seated about three hundred persons. "The building committee was H. Hammond, C. P. Sheldon, William Elliott, O. W. Porter and Jesse James. The church was dedicated in 1872. Two years later their membership was thirty, and they had an unusually large Sunday School of 128 pupils.²⁰⁴ Pastors were [the] Rev. George G. Odiorne, and [the] Rev. C. F. Dodge." In 1878 the trustees were J. W. Casad, H. Hammond and C. P. Sheldon; A. Shaw was the Secretary.²⁰⁵

Mrs. H. R. Ripley (Edith Case) is the daughter of J. W. Casad and is the only living Universalist in the town today. She writes that she thinks the church was disbanded in the early 80's, the building was remodeled and is now used as a Ford garage.

Her grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. Aaron Gilbert, became members through her grandfather's study of the Bible. They were brought up at the Shaker Colony, at Lebanon, New York. Her grandmother, at her death in 1895, was a member of the Church of the Redeemer, (Universalist) in Chicago, Illinois.^{206*}

204

Universalist Register, Boston, 1874.

205

History of Cedar County, Iowa, Chicago, Ill. 1878, p. 473.

206

Mrs. H. R. Ripley, Tipton, Iowa, to Elva Tucker, Cedar Falls, Iowa, 1943.

*Other members were Mr. & Mrs. Alonzo Shaw, Mr. & Mrs. C.P. Holden, Mr. & Mrs. H. Hammond, Dr. & Mrs. H.H. Maynard, Mr. & Mrs. Jesse James, Mr. & Mrs. C.P. Sheldon, Mr. & Mrs. Wm. Elliott, Mr. & Mrs. O.W. Potter, Mr. & Mrs. J.W. Casad.

Vinton

The Vinton Universalist Church, organized in 1867, had in 1873 a church membership of sixty-seven and a Sunday School of eighty-two. Their building was valued at four thousand dollars but they were without a regular pastor. A year later they vanished from the state directory and were never again reorganized.²⁰⁷ This would appear to be a situation where closer supervision by the state might have enabled them to secure a pastor to conserve their modest success.

Viola

A Universalist Society at Viola appeared in the Convention in 1867 and was last represented in 1886. The information was very meager concerning this group. Apparently it was active early in this period because in 1873 they were having services one fourth of the time; their Sunday School, organized in 1869, had twenty-six pupils, and they owned a brick building valued at \$2225. A decade later there was no annual report made. However, some members remained interested and attended the Conventions until 1886.²⁰⁸

Waterloo

"It is well said that 'like attracts like' and nowhere does this adage hold more true than in the drawing together of people of the same religious belief.

²⁰⁷ I.U.C., President's Notebook, Universalist Register and Almanac, Boston, 1873.

²⁰⁸ Ibid.

Previous to 1875 there had come to Waterloo, a thriving little town on the Cedar River, men and women from the east and nearby states, to cast their lot with the growing prairie town. In those days of slower travel, of fewer amusements and perhaps, of greater sociability, conversations often turned to religion; and it would be natural that those whose ideas, ideals and interests were in common should often meet to discuss religious opinions. Thus it was that those of the Universalist faith often gathered in the early days to discuss the great truths of the faith they held."

As early as 1866

"there was a group of liberal people who held services in Lincoln Hall in West Waterloo. [The] Rev. Mr. [R. G.] Hamilton conducted services and the Sunday School was formed." The Waterloo Courier shows that a Universalist Society was formed in 1866 "but no local records are now in existence to give any information previous to December 6, 1874. It is evident that the oldest records show that the Society began at the later date.

"There must have been gay as well as serious meetings among those pioneers of the Waterloo church, as the records show that the Society began with \$366.94 on hand, which had been made by sociables, plays and other entertainments given during the Society's intermission and probably a balance left from its early efforts. However, on December 6, 1874, a meeting was held for the purpose of organizing a liberal church. Rules were adopted, officers elected, and the Rev. James J. Austin was selected as the first pastor. Mr. Austin was also elected the first president of the Universalist Society which was designed to carry on the business of the Universalist Church. Mr. W. Rupell was elected secretary, while W. F. Brown, A. T. Lane and R. S. Leland were elected trustees. At the first meeting in 1874, the secretary, Mr. Rupell, was instructed to purchase a record book and spread upon it the rules and regulations of the Universalist Church and Society that those who wished to subscribe their names might do so, at the next meeting. This next meeting took place on January 24, 1875, at which time quite a large number became members of the first liberal church in Black Hawk County. [There is a possibility that Cedar Falls was organized before this.] As mentioned throughout the records, this date is taken as the beginning of the present Universalist Church in Waterloo.

"Among those who were its first members and who helped in its formation were names that have been

prominent in Waterloo ever since. The names of these founders of the church and the names of their sons and daughters have figured prominently in business, in civic enterprise, and in all else that tended toward the making of a bigger and better city. Among these were Mr. and Mrs. A. T. Weatherwax, who carried on faithfully for many years. Mr. Weatherwax was president of the Society in its early years and was followed by his son H. E. Weatherwax, an ardent supporter of liberal religion and treasurer of the Society from 1905 to his death in 1926. Another member of this family, Clara Weatherwax, who later became Mrs. Herbert M. Reed, served as secretary in 1880 and for many years thereafter. J. D. Platt was named president of the Society following the death of A. T. Weatherwax and served for a number of years.Other names that are outstanding on the early records of the church are: Mr. and Mrs. J. C. Cropper, Mr. and Mrs. F. E. Cutler, Mr. and Mrs. A. T. Lane, and family, W. F. and W. H. Brown and families, Mr. and Mrs. George Morgan, Mr. and Mrs. W. H. Cutler, Mr. and Mrs. J. H. Pollard, Mr. and Mrs. H. B. Allen, Mr. and Mrs. G. W. Ferguson, Mr. and Mrs. N. Doty, Mr. and Mrs. L. Hallock, Mr. and Mrs. E. E. Hatch, E. R. Travis, D. H. Geddes, C. G. Walker, E. P. Sinclair, Mr. and Mrs. W. Rupell, Mr. and Mrs. W. L. Hitchcock, Mr. and Mrs. W. L. Colburn, and Mr. and Mrs. J. Q. A. Rider, whose son, Loren and daughter, Nellie followed loyally in their footsteps.

"For two years the little Society flourished. A Sunday School was formed, led by the enthusiasm of such workers as Cora Lane, Ellen Doty, Mrs. J. J. Austin, J. B. Hubbard, and Miss Alice Butterworth. The Society met in a small audience room rented for the immediate purpose. They purchased an organ, a library was started which later grew to quite large proportions, and on September 12, 1875, the trustees purchased a lot at the corner of Mulberry and East Fourth streets, expecting to build a church within the next few years.

"The members enjoyed a great deal of social life during these early years. The records show that many parties, sociables and other entertainments were given, many of them held in the homes of their members. During a part of the first two years, Rev. J. J. Austin divided his time between Waterloo and Waverly, preaching on alternate Sundays in each place."²⁰⁹

The following quotation reveals the action of the Society in determining that policy:

²⁰⁹ Dr. Effie McCollum Jones and Miss Nellie M. Housden, Short History of the Universalist Church and Society of Waterloo, (Ms.).

"Whereas the Universalist Church at Waverly is without a pastor and the Society is anxious to have preaching once a month at least, if not oftener, and Bro. Austin has been invited to do that preaching. Resolved that we relinquish our claim upon one fourth of Brother Austin's time and consent to his going to Waverly to preach one Sunday in each month."

They seemed to regret relinquishing any part of his time but their financial difficulties seemed to make it necessary.

"Resolved further that we regret by reason of our financial strait to release our claim to his services feeling under deep obligations to him for what he has done in quickening us into life and starting us upon a road where we reluctantly entertain a thought of lagging a step - much more retracting one."²¹⁰

"However after two quite prosperous years, circumstances arose which made it difficult for the Society to continue without more income than was available. Services were therefore discontinued for about one and one-half years."²¹¹

It was difficult for them to arrive at the decision to suspend services, nevertheless, August 15th, they adopted the following resolution:

"Whereas owing to circumstances over which the Society had no control it seems inexpedient to resume services at the expiration of the present vacation.

"Therefore resolved that Rev. J. J. Austin be notified of the fact that he may select some other field more pecuniarily remunerative.

"Resolved further as an expression of our feeling that this unavoidable step is mixed with double regrets - the suspension of services and the giving up of a pastor who has given the Society an impetus which must ultimately result in the building of a church."²¹²

The Methodist Episcopal church proposal to exchange their church and lot for the Universalist lot and a

²¹⁰ The Universalist Church and Society of Waterloo, Iowa, Secretary's Record, Vol. 1, p. 35.

²¹¹ Jones and Housden, op. cit.

²¹² The Universalist Church and Society of Waterloo, Iowa, Secretary's Record, Vol. 1, p. 48.

bonus of one thousand dollars, was refused. They were not without their hopes in spite of the cessation of services because Mrs. Lane offered two thousand dollars, Mr. Weatherwax one thousand and another member five hundred. However, it was impossible to do anything but store their furniture. "So the little fire that warmed hearts and hands gradually grew cold and dim and went out today - for a while till re-kindled amidst the chill of December - ☉ bleakest December!!!"²¹³

In July, 1878 they sold at auction all their furniture, and instructed G. W. Morgan to collect and preserve the books and papers. They voted to send one hundred dollars to the Waverly Society if the latter would cancel all the church debt. It was not sent until 1881 when they were financially able to do so or until the Waverly Society was able to raise the necessary funds to cancel their indebtedness.²¹⁴

The state historian's records show that services were resumed within two years, though the records of the Society do not show any activity until 1881. On January 8, 1883 the Articles of Incorporation were changed to read "The Universalist Church and Society of Waterloo, Iowa". In September that year they unanimously adopted the Universalist profession of faith. December fifteenth the following year they passed a paper calling for subscriptions to

²¹³

Ibid., Vol. 1, p. 52.

²¹⁴

Ibid., Vol. 1, p. 64.

build a church on the lot they owned. It was to be built in 1885; the cost was not to exceed seven thousand dollars and not less than five thousand dollars.²¹⁵ During that year there were frequent business meetings but no record of religious ones and no mention of money being expended for them.

During that year of promise they were to sustain a sad blow. A very prominent member, Brother A. T. Weatherwax, passed away. "Resolved, that in the death of Brother Weatherwax our church and society have parted with a valuable officer and member, a most exemplary citizen, and an ardent, honest and sincere friend."²¹⁶

^{The}
 Rev. J. J. Austin remained with them until about 1886. Part of the time he was just an active parish member, and the rest of the time he was their pastor. In 1887 the parish had a church but no pastor. June 11th, the president, J. D. Platt, read an offer stating "that the Cedar Falls society would be glad to have our Society consider the matter of regular meetings on each alternate Sabbath and join them in engaging [the] Rev. [James] Gorton who now preaches in West Union and Cedar Falls. They suggested our having one meeting soon where we might meet and listen to Mr. Gorton and then we might act more intelligently."²¹⁷
 A committee was appointed to make an investigation.

²¹⁵ Ibid., Vol. 1, p. 75.

²¹⁶ Ibid., Vol. 1, p. 76.

²¹⁷ The Universalist Church and Society of Waterloo, Iowa, Secretary's Record, Vol. 1, p. 85.

That summer another charter member passed away.

"Resolved that this community has lost in the death of Brother [A. T.] Lane, a man who stood deservedly high in the confidence of his associates, was strong in our religious faith and who adorned his station in all the walks of life."²¹⁸

September 28, 1887, Mr. Brown offered them the use of the opera house (now the location of the Brown apartments) for the coming year if they would resume services. The Rev. Dr. Crum was present and offered the following resolution,

"Resolved, that the Universalist Society of Waterloo hereby extends a call to [the] Rev. James Gorton to become its pastor for the ensuing year, beginning November 1, 1887 and preaching one sermon each Sabbath for one year at a salary of \$500.00. . . Provided that sufficient funds can be raised by subscription for defraying necessary expenses of services."²¹⁹

That summer another charter member passed on. The society recorded, "That this community has lost in the death of Brother A. T. Lane, a man who stood deservedly high in the confidence of his associates, was strong in our religious faith, and who adorned his station in all the walks of life."²²⁰

By November they had raised the funds and made arrangements to lease the opera house. Mrs. Lane and Mrs. Weatherwax met with the Cedar Falls ladies and agreed that

²¹⁸ Ibid., Vol. 1, p. 88.

²¹⁹ Ibid., Vol. 1, p. 90.

²²⁰ Ibid., Vol. 1, p. 88.

Waterloo would have morning services the first six months and evening services the last six months of the year. The Cedar Falls services would be reversed, evening services for the first six months and morning services the last six months.²²¹ It appeared to be a very advantageous arrangement for both parishes. However, it was short-lived because the Rev. Mr. Gorton resigned October 5, 1888. "Resolved that in all our social and pastoral relations with Brother Gorton and his esteemed family we have only words of commendation and we part with Brother and Sister Gorton with pleasant memories of the past year and pray that their future may be rewarded with God's richest blessings."²²²

The Rev. L. F. Porter of Brooklyn, Pa. was called at a salary of one thousand dollars. They held services in the "Workman's Lodge",²²³ while they were continuing their struggle to raise money for erecting a church. The Rev. Mr. Porter, F. C. Platt and Dr. H. W. Brown were sent to Chicago to get the plans. July 22, 1889 they accepted the plans as drawn by Mr. Starbuck, but within a month they were rejected by the building committee. Mr. Joslyn, a Cedar Rapids architect, drew the plans finally used²²⁴ in erecting the building on the corner of Fourth and Mulberry streets across from the city park. All throughout the fall

²²¹

Ibid., Vol. 1, p. 98.

²²²

Ibid., Vol. 1, p. 102.

²²³

Ibid., Vol. 1, p. 116.

²²⁴

Ibid., Vol. 1, p. 126.

and early winter they were "as busy as beavers", raising funds, planning, letting contracts, arranging a mortgage, discussing and buying furnishings. Sometime between December 10, 1889 and February 12, 1890 the dedication was held. On the latter date they allowed bills for flowers and music and extended a vote of thanks to the pastor and his wife for the interest manifested in the prosperity of their church and in the church building.²²⁵ Judge Platt, the president, wrote an historical sketch for the special occasion.

On August 18, 1890 President Platt offered to give the church one thousand dollars if all their debt above that amount was liquidated by December 1, 1890. They raised it by collecting actual cash or pledges.

April 27, 1892 they were forced to accept the resignation of the Rev. and Mrs. Porter because of his increasing blindness. Four months before they had unanimously rejected a previous attempt of these ministers to withdraw the first of the year. Upon the Rev. Charlotte Porter had fallen many of the pastoral burdens during the latter part of their ministry.

"Resolved that it is with grateful hearts we acknowledge how much we are indebted to Bro. and Sister Porter for the pretty church in which we worship, for the many who have been won to our faith and fellowship by their faithful and earnest preaching of the word.

"Resolved that we would bear willing testimony to

the good they have done to our cause in the State at large by the salutary and helpful influence of their Christian teaching and example, also that by the same they have so generally won the respect and esteem of our citizens, and in a large measure removed much of the popular prejudice against our denomination."²²⁶

May 23, 1892, ^{the} Rev. B. W. Jones and his wife, students at Lombard College, were extended a call. They were instructed by President Sinclair to be ordained at the college, but the service was held in Dr. Crum's church in Dubuque following their graduation. The following February the Rev. Mr. Jones was persuaded to withdraw his resignation and accept their pledge to renewed and united efforts for the welfare of their church in the future.²²⁷ In the fall of 1893 they ran into serious financial difficulties in which both the pastor and his wife were willing to sacrifice a part of their salary if the parish would not mortgage the church.

In February, 1894 the Rev. Mr. Jones received a call to Barre, Vermont and so tendered his resignation. The parish meeting felt obliged to accept it. "That while this church and parish will greatly miss both Mr. Jones and his wife, who has so ably assisted him; and while their going will be a great loss to us, we feel that we cannot offer them an equal inducement to remain."²²⁸

That winter they lost by death J. D. Platt, long a leading member. They wrote,

²²⁶

Ibid., Vol. 1, p. 178.

²²⁷Ibid., Vol. 1, p. 185.

²²⁸Ibid., Vol. 1, p. 196.

"That we desire ever to remember with grateful hearts all that Brother Platt did by personal service and with the means at his command to help on the cause of Universalism in this city, and may his example be ever an inspiration to us so to lend our lives and our means to the upbuilding of the cause of righteousness and truth."²²⁹

He bequeathed the church two thousand dollars in bonds which they would receive after five years if they retained "the Winchester Profession of Faith" as their standard of Universalism.

The Rev. J. M. Getchell of Marshall, Michigan began his pastorate in May 1894 and remained for only one year. They then called ^{the} Rev. A. R. Tillinghast at once. At the beginning of his service they purchased a stereopticon, wired the church for electricity and obtained the necessary equipment. The following year they used the Platt bequest to build a parsonage on the rear half of the church lot. The first mention of a young people's organization is made during the first year of his pastorate.²³⁰

"The church continued to add new names to its roll, the Sunday School was increased largely and the musically minded members of the church, which included such persons as H. W. Brown, Judge F. C. Platt and Mrs. Wm. Thompson, built up an excellent choir. One of the pioneer Sunday School workers was Miss Mary Edgerton, who continued active in all departments of the church for more than forty years and was an ardent supporter until her death early in 1930."²³¹

The pioneers sowed with abundance and reaped a

²²⁹

Ibid., Vol. 1, p. 198.

²³⁰

Ibid., Vol. 1, pp. 232 - 256.

²³¹

Dr. Effie McCollum Jones and Miss Nellie M. Housden, Shont History of the Universalist Church and Society of Waterloo, (Ms.).

harvest of more than thirty churches which had survived the early years of controversy, opposition and ostracism. Some of them marched staunchly on into the new century defending their faith, and some lost heart and vanished from the scene. The early societies joined hands with the new ones, strengthened their cause and increased their individual joy and pride in it.

Chapter IV

THE NEW CHURCHES: 1870-1900

During the period from 1870 to 1900 the Iowa Universalist movement expanded in missionary enterprise and suffered serious losses as previously noted. The expansion reached a peak of thirty-five new societies in the 1870's and gradually declined to eleven in the 1890's. Many of those organized in the first decade survived only a short time. They were reached by the still active circuit riders or the State Missionary Board, but they were not sufficiently well led and supervised to consolidate the gains of the movement. The state organization realized by the middle of the last decade that they were losing ground. The choice of perhaps the most able minister in the state, Dr. Amos Crum, as the State Superintendent of Churches, was an indication of that awakening. He was commissioned to revive the dormant parishes and to open new fields.

The new churches formed in the first decade of this period, which had at least ten years of organized history were Algona, Belle Plaine, Bloomfield, Clinton, Grinnell, Maquoketa, New Sharon, Osage, Storm Lake, Waverly, Webster City and Wilton. In the second decade only three survived for ten years. They were Castalia, Otranto and West Union. In the last decade the ones with sufficient existence to merit recognition were Charles City, Iowa Falls, Northwood and Shenandoah. Out of approximately

twenty societies with distinct individual histories about half of them survived until the twentieth century. The ensuing pages will carry the accounts of each new group in the order of its origin.

Waverly

In May 1870, ^{the} Rev. J. R. Freeman, late of Canton, New York, Theological School, addressed the people of Waverly at the Stone School House in the First Ward on "The Saving Power of Christianity as explained by a Universalist."¹ This was the first recorded missionary work in that locality. However, there might have been other earlier field workers because one month later, under the leadership of the Rev. J. Stebbins, a notice appeared in the Waverly Republican inviting all who were interested in liberal Christianity to come and help plan an organization.²

Throughout that summer and fall weekly services were held, a few times in Barnums Hall, but more often in the Old Stone School House. The Rev. Z. Cook from Minnesota preached at Lashbrook's Hall in September, where they also held a festival that netted over one hundred dollars which was to be used in the furnishing of the church they³ were building. Mrs. S. H. Curtis, Mr. & Mrs. Barker, and

¹ Waverly Republican, May 10, 1870.

² Ibid., June 23, 1870.

³ Ibid., Nov. 10, 1870.

Mr. and Mrs. Bacon were thanked for their liberal contributions and valuable services. The Building Committee also thanked all who had contributed liberally in the building of the church.⁴ Mr. H. H. Couse was the carpenter engaged to construct the modest New England - style church on West Water street facing an open parkway overlooking the Cedar River.⁵

It was dedicated in the latter part of December 1870, "by Col. J. P. Sanford the distinguished traveler, lecturer and preacher. At the commencement of the services the church was \$800 in debt, at the close" of them "less than \$300 of the indebtedness remained."⁶

The editor of the local paper wrote, "The friends of Universalism have labored industriously to build their church and we are glad to know they have so far succeeded."⁷

The Reverends N. S. Sage and S. S. Hubbard preached several times during that winter. The former wrote,

"At Waverly, the friends have just completed a house of worship. The house is not large but neat and convenient...an ornament to the place and a substantial monument to the faithfulness and zeal of the few whose souls are in the good work. Last July they owned only the naked lot where now this church stands complete in its beauty, telling all the people that Universalism has henceforth a name and a home in Waverly.

"To give an idea of the zeal and vim of the friends

⁴ Ibid., Dec. 15, 1870.

⁵ Conversation with Milly Curtis and a visit to the site of the Waverly church.

⁶ Waverly Republican, Dec. 29, 1870.

⁷ Ibid., Dec. 22, 1870.

here, it is necessary only to say that they never have had a settled minister among them have had only occasional preaching and that only as they could secure the services of brethren passing through, either in the missionary work of the state, or to other fields of labor.

"What ^{they} now need is a settled pastor, one who, as the brethren intimate, is thoroughly imbued with the spirit of our denominational work, and who will bring them into affiliation with the sisterhood of churches through out the state. As they now stand, they feel that they are isolated

"Who will come into this field and do the work of building up?

"Waverly will do its part and make a grand center from which to radiate. The friends here can and are willing to pay a good minister \$1000 or \$1200 per year. Aside from the good work to be done with this church, we have many friends at Horton only eight miles away, who are anxious to have preaching as soon as some man comes along who will organize them and gather them into the work. At Cedar Falls, only fifteen miles from Waverly, we have a church organization and many zealous friends who are anxious to be set in running order as soon as the good work can be done. At Waterloo, only twenty miles away there is a large liberal element and all it needs is a little effort to develop it and it will turn in the right direction. Now it seems to me that some good man should be sent here at once."⁸

In April the parish obtained the services of the Rev. J. H. Ballou at a salary of twelve hundred dollars. Mr. and Mrs. G. H. Curtis, Miss Curtis, and Ed. Drake (director of the Waverly Silver Cornet Band) took over the music department.⁹

In June, 1871 the Sunday School was organized. "Mr. James Stephenson was chosen Superintendent and kindly accepted the responsible position, Mrs. H. D. Perry was

⁸
The New Covenant, (Chicago), March 4, 1871.

⁹
Ibid., Feb. 23, - April 27, 1871.

elected assistant Superintendent. Several classes were formed and Mr. Seymour Goodspeed, Mrs. Levi Nichols and Mrs. I. A. Goodenough were appointed teachers." They met after the regular morning service at ten thirty. "Let the little ones be gathered and trained in the way they should go, that when they are old they may not depart from it."¹⁰

The Rev. Mr. Ballou served this small but vigorous and generous parish until May 12, 1872 when he preached his farewell sermon. There were many friendly and approving comments on his doctrinal sermons during his pastorate. The local editor wrote of him, "Mr. Ballou is a man of ability and a sociable gentleman and we regret to hear that he is going to leave Waverly."¹¹ Until October of 1873 the Ballou's were in town. The ladies held regular monthly meetings; there were no church services until the Rev. J. J. Austin from Waterloo began coming once a month in 1874 to preach.¹²

The Rev. A. Countryman of Dubuque preached three sermons one Sabbath in June, 1876. "The sermon in the morning was a manly Christian argument, and one that most devout orthodox believers could conscientiously say 'amen' to." In the evening the newspaper reporter felt he brilliantly illustrated the Universalist doctrine but was

¹⁰ Ibid., June 8, 1871.

¹¹ Ibid., May 9, 1872.

¹² Ibid., Oct. 2, 1873.

rather blunt.¹³

^{The}
 ^Rev. Florence Kollock must have been the pastor prior to September 21, 1876 for she is reported to be re-suming her work. She was given an elegant set of furs and a number of valuable and useful articles as a slight token of appreciation. The presentation was a surprise and Miss Kollock's emotions were so deep and heartfelt she could hardly express her gratitude.¹⁴

Early in February, 1877 a series of Gospel Meetings were held under the auspices of the Western Board of Missions. They began on the 13th and continued four days. The ministers participating were the Rev. Miss Chapin of Chicago, the Rev. Isa A. Eberhart of Belle Plaine, the Rev. Mr. H. V. Chase of Cedar Rapids and the Rev. J. J. Austin of Waterloo. On Thursday evening Miss Florence E. Kollock was ordained. The building was crowded, and many were turned away. Miss Chapin preached the ordination sermon on Christian work; it was the pastor's charge to see that physical man was clothed, to cultivate his intellect and to improve and cultivate his morals. Of Miss Chapin the local editor wrote that she "delivered a sermon at the Universalist church yesterday evening that abounded in fine thoughts. The Reverend lady has a happy command of vigorous English, is an easy and forcible speaker, and was listened to very attentively by a very large audience."

¹³ Ibid., June 8, 1876.

¹⁴ Ibid., Sept. 21 - Oct. 26, 1876.

Nine new members were added during or after these meetings.¹⁵

The Rev. Miss Kollock was active in serving the liberals in the nearby towns of Tripoli and Horton. Each Sunday she rode from ten to eighteen miles between the morning and the evening services.¹⁶

In August, 1878 Miss Kollock accepted a call from Blue Island, Illinois. The Blue Ribbon Club [Temperance] expressed their regret at the departure of one whose Christian kindness, gentleness and noble spirit would be greatly missed.¹⁷ During the next year they held lay services and the Sunday School met regularly. The Rev. Erasmus Manford preached there on September 22nd. The following April--

"Efforts are being made to have Rev. Miss Kollock back here again the coming summer and to this end parties are around for the purpose of finding out how much salary they can offer the lady. We sincerely trust those able to do so will contribute liberally, for Miss Kollock is a most valuable member to any city, and one that will do great good wherever she locates."¹⁸

Unhappily she was not able to return. The following year the Rev. Sophie Gibbs became their pastor.¹⁹

From 1881 to 1886 they held occasional services. The Rev. J. W. Burrough was there in 1880; the Rev. W. P.

¹⁵ Ibid., Feb. 8-22, 1877.

¹⁶ Ibid., May 10, 1877.

¹⁷ Ibid., Aug. 1, 1878.

¹⁸ Ibid., April 3, 1879.

¹⁹ The Waverly Democrat, March 19, 1880.

Payne and the Rev. E. Green in 1882; the Rev. F. D. Pierce of Cedar Falls and the Rev. A. M. Shimer in 1884; the same year the Rev. Amos Crum of Dubuque held services from April 7-9. In 1885 and 1886 there was no mention of any activities and in the latter year the building was sold to the Evangelical Lutheran Society and is now owned by the Peace Evangelical Society.

Many of the members of this small but very active parish were farmers from the eastern states. Seymour Goodspeed and his family were among the leaders. Mr. Milly Curtis, still residing in Waverly, recalls him as the most active member and leader. Among the other people associated with this society were Mr. and Mrs. Levi Nichols, Mr. and Mrs. Bacon, Mr. and Mrs. G. H. Curtis, Mr. and Mrs. Ab. Barker, Mrs. I. A. Goodenough, James Stephenson, Mr. A. Broadie, Mrs. Porter Bement, Mrs. Ed. Coburn, Mrs. J. H. Hollenbeck, Mrs. Thomas Woodring, Mrs. H. K. Wells, Mrs. Dopkins, Mrs. Wm. Bodle, Mr. and Mrs. H. H. Couse, Mrs. John Elliott, J. Q. A. Russell, Mr. and Mrs. Babcock, Mrs. H. D. Perry and Mrs. George R. Dean. [Perhaps the husbands of some of these ladies were also active, but their wives did the entertaining or were quite active in the ladies society; and so, they received the publicity.]

In this parish they gave many socials, partly for the money they needed but also because both young and old enjoyed the fun they had. It was not unusual for them to clear from one to two hundred dollars at a festival. In

the winter these were frequently held at Lashbrook Hall where the ladies served a supper after which ^{everyone} they danced or was entertained. In the warm months they met at the home of one of the farming members where they had all the Black Caps, white sugar and cream on strawberries, ~~and~~ ice cream, that they could eat, and then danced on an improvised platform. Once a year they held a very successful fair. One year they netted \$195 but had fifty dollars worth of fancy work left on hand. The ladies must have been fine needle women as well as good business managers.

Steamboat Rock

The Rev. B. F. Snook, the energetic Universalist minister, who served at one time or another in almost every parish in the state, was active in Steamboat Rock prior to 1874, because by May 27th they had raised eleven hundred dollars for a new church building.²⁰ In such a very small community that was quite an accomplishment. The records of the State Convention reveal that their society was reported at the convention in 1870 and that the society was organized April 21, 1874;²¹ therefore, it had had at least four years of existence.

In the winter of 1874 "Captain Ackerman" told the Eldora Herald editor that "the lectures by Rev. [Mr.] Snook on 'Universalism' were powerful arguments in favor of his doctrine and that he converted a large number

²⁰ Eldora Herald, May 27, 1874.

²¹ I. U. C., President's Notebook.

of people to his belief. [The] Rev. [Mr.] Cook of this place [Eldora] held a joint discussion with Mr. Snook on Thursday evening, but according to the Captain's judgment, Mr. Cook was 'scooped'."²²

During the summer of 1875 they erected their ^{church} home. It was located on Lot 5, Block 19 in the corner of Henry J. Finster's lawn, facing the view of the town.²³ On November seventh it was dedicated by the Rev. J. W. Hanson of Chicago.²⁴ One thousand dollars was raised by subscriptions so that they were beginning free from debt and with one of the "neatest, tastiest and most cozy places of worship in this section."²⁵

The first six months of 1878 the Rev. Mr. Snook was traveling in the "Old World". During that time the parish was quite active socially having fairs, suppers, dances and masquerade balls to raise funds. After his return Mr. Snook came to Steamboat Rock as often as his other charge and his lecture tour would permit, which was usually about once a month.

In closing the year of 1880 they recalled their pastor, a large part of his salary had been pledged and they stated their church had never been in a more flourishing condition. The Rev. Mr. Snook was with them one more

²² Eldora Herald, Feb. 24, 1874.

²³ I. U. C., President's Notebook.

²⁴ Eldora Herald, Oct. 20, 1875.

²⁵ Ibid., Nov. 10, 1875.

year,²⁶ then their church became dormant. In September 1890, the Rev. Amos Crum of Dubuque went there with a view to re-establishing this society.²⁷ The following month the Rev. T. W. Woodrow of Marshalltown held a series of meetings²⁸ in that church, but to no avail. The Rev. Mr. Snook seems to have been the fervent flame that lit a glowing candle in that tiny community. Without him the liberal society flickered for a time and then vanished. No doubt they were too few in number ever to support a pastor adequately and the Rev. Mr. Snook was so located geographically that he could minister unto them as a part time shepherd. When he moved to Storm Lake he could no longer serve them. It was doubtless impossible to find another minister who either could or would do this. However, they maintained the frame work of a society until early in the twentieth century.²⁹

Storm Lake

The most successful Universalist church in the northwestern part of the state was located in the beautiful town of Storm Lake. The liberals began to commune together before it was a well settled region, and the town numbered considerably less than six hundred.

26

Ibid., Dec. 22, 1880.

27

Ibid., Sept. 30, 1890.

28

Ibid., Jan. 16, 1891

29

I.U.C., President's Notebook.

The local paper, dated May 24, 1870, reveals that "Five church organizations have established themselves in Storm Lake. They are the Universalist, Methodist, Congregationalist, Presbyterian and Catholic."³⁰

Whether for lack of members or leadership the group either became inactive during the ensuing four years or perchance still active but small. They desired to expand their membership; so, a new organization was formed March 28, 1874, known as "The Liberal Christian Association". The following persons were its incorporators: Wm. Guilford, W. L. Vestal, J. A. Dean, S. W. Hobbs, Henry Holcomb, Wm. C. Weddington and G. S. Robinson. "The object of this association shall be to aid and promote the cause of Liberal-Christianity".

The Society met in different churches at stated times. The Baptist church was leased for half³¹ the time for a period of five years. The ministers who came were practically all Universalists. The Rev. B. F. Snook preached four sermons on Universalist doctrines. "They were attended by large audiences and listened to with evident interest and satisfaction. The gentleman is a pleasing and logical speaker."³² He came many times thereafter.

In November Rev. J. W. Hanson, editor of "The New Covenant" wrote the following after he had been a

³⁰

Storm Lake Pilot, May 24, 1870.

³¹

Ibid., Nov. 3, 1880.

³²

Ibid., April 28, 1875.

guest of this parish. "A number of the most prominent and excellent people are of our faith, and are anxious to obtain the services of a preacher, whom they feel they could sustain one-half the time."³³

In December 1875 Rev. Isa A. Eberhart accepted their call and moved with his family from Vinton. He preached the third and fourth Sunday of each month and did mission work in Cherokee, Newell and Sac City. Following a Rose Sunday service in June, 1876, forty people pledged themselves to organize and support a Sunday School. Their first officers were: Superintendent, Rev. I. A. Eberhart; Assistant Superintendent, J. A. Dean; Secretary, Hon. G. S. Robinson; and Treasurer, W. L. Vestal.³⁴

The Rev. Mr. Eberhart was elected Secretary of the Iowa State Convention of Universalists and so found it necessary to move from the northwestern part of the state to Belle Plaine which was more centrally located.³⁵ The Rev. J. A. Hoyt filled the pulpit for a year and was followed by the Rev. Karl Gerner of Cherokee, designated as a very capable young man.³⁶ It was during the latter's pastorate that they began talking of building a church. In April, 1879 they had \$2500.00 pledged for that purpose.³⁷ It was

³³ Ibid., Nov. 24, 1875.

³⁴ Ibid., June 28 and July 12, 1876.

³⁵ Ibid., Dec. 27, 1876.

³⁶ Ibid., Oct. 30, 1879.

³⁷ Ibid., Apr. 30, 1879.

in June of that year that the newspaper notices began occasionally to call it the "Universalist Church".³⁸

With the lease soon to expire on the Baptist church they began their building plans in earnest by appointing two committees; one, on subscriptions consisting of J. A. Dean, E. I. Sutfin, George Currier, Mrs. Vestal and Mrs. Fuller; the other, on the building composed of G. S. Robinson, James Harker, S. W. Hobbs, James F. Toy, E. M. Fuller, Mrs. Watkins and Mrs. Eastman.³⁹

After serving for a year and a half the Rev. Karl Gerner resigned and the Rev. B. F. Snook accepted the charge. He was to be in Storm Lake every other Sunday for services.⁴⁰ At the same time he was residing in Webster City and serving that parish.

By May, 1880 they had \$2885 in the building fund so that they could ask help from Henry Fisher, Esquire, who resided near Storm Lake and was an "architect of experience and reputation." He

"most generously offered to furnish plans and specifications for the new church, and superintend the erection thereof, free of cost to the Association. A contract was let to J. M. Russell, Esq. of this city, than whom there is not a better builder in the whole northwest. The Iowa Railroad Land and Town Lot Company generously donated a fine lot on Lake Ave. and the erection of the building began. The contract price was \$2885. Certain changes were made, so that the total amount paid Mr. Russell was \$2950. A heating furnace, stained glass windows, etc., furnished by the Association increased the cost to

³⁸ Ibid., June 18, 1879.

³⁹ Ibid., Aug. 18, 1879.

⁴⁰ Ibid., Jan. 14, 1880.

\$3,200. On last Saturday, morning a meeting of the Association was held and a deficiency of about \$800 was found to exist. It had often been told the people that the new church would be dedicated free from debt and that there should be no 'begging' as a part of the dedication ceremonies, and the Association was determined that this promise would be faithfully kept. A subscription paper was drawn up and circulated. By 9:00 o'clock the entire amount - and - more was subscribed."

The new building was "located on Lake Ave. within one lot of Third Street and is the most beautiful building in town. The style of architecture is Gothic The entire exterior and interior of the church presents a most pleasing and beautiful appearance."⁴¹

A donor of one hundred dollars had written, "Whatever you do let it be nice, not a big barn of a place, but rather a gem, where the beauty of holiness is patent to the eye as well as to the heart." They had tried to do just that, for it was only thirty-two by fifty feet and the foregoing description gives the impression of good taste and beauty.⁴²

Dr. J. W. Hanson's dedicatory sermon contained these words,

"May these doors always be open to the hospitable reception of all truth and may it be so consecrated by truth, as to receive the blessing of the God of truth, and be so useful to the best interests of worshipping souls in the generations to come that many shall say of it, as they realize its previous value, 'This is none other than the house of God and the very gate of Heaven'."⁴³

⁴¹ Ibid., Nov. 3, 1880.

⁴² Ibid., Mar. 31, 1880.

⁴³ Ibid., Nov. 3, 1880.

The incorporators of the Liberal Christian group which had just completed this building

"were men whose views of God, life and the final destiny of the human race did not accord with the generally promulgated doctrines of the so-called orthodox denominations.

"The Association formed in 1874 had no religious features so far as denominations were concerned. Among the members of that body were those who in their eastern homes had been Universalists or Unitarians, and yet others who had never belonged to any church, and still others who at some time in their lives had been members of orthodox churches. The Association was a mere business compact or organization, whose chief business was to secure and pay for the services of preachers of the Liberal faith. Under this organization the Liberal Christian Church was built. Having secured a religious home, many of the members desired to organize and perfect a religious organization. Between the Universalist and Unitarian religious bodies, as now organized, there is but the slightest difference. Upon a full, free and fraternal conference it was found that a large majority were in favor of the organization of a Universalist Church. In fact it was very nearly unanimous, and the utmost harmony and fraternal feeling prevailed.

"Last Sunday was decided upon as a time when a Universalist Church should be added to the list of religious organizations in Storm Lake. It was the last Sunday of Rev. B. F. Snook's year as pastor of the Liberal Christian Association and as that gentleman had worked so faithfully, so zealously and so successfully for the upbuilding of the Liberal faith in Storm Lake, it was eminently proper that he should close his work among this people by the organization of a religious society whose faith corresponded so precisely with his own. On Sunday morning [Feb. 1881] the work of organization began. After the close of the sermon Mr. Snook read the Agreement, Articles of Belief, and the Covenant, and after appropriate preliminary remarks asked those who wished to join the Universalist Church to rise to their feet. A large proportion of the audience responded and the complete success of the church movement was at once assured.

"The election of officers resulted as follows: Moderator, M. D. Watkins; Deacons, G. S. Robinson, James Harker; Treasurer, James F. Toy; Clerk, W. E.

Brown.

"When evening came the church was occupied by an audience which has not been excelled in numbers and character since the dedication day. The excellent choir opened the services with one of their best selections Mr. Snook preached a sermon especially adapted to the occasion and the times. It was a calm, dignified and logical exposition of the Liberal faith, and appealed not to passion or excitement but to the mind, reason, heart, and conscience of the people. At its close Mr. Snook again read the Agreement, Articles of Belief and Covenant." After which six ladies and gentlemen were baptized and about twenty-five united with the church and received the right hand of fellowship..!"*

"Mr. Snook briefly addressed the members of the church and the audience on their new and sacred relations, and urged the point that no religion was worth anything that did not make men and women better .. more loving to their fellow beings and more grateful to God for his mercies."⁴⁴

[Mr. E. I. Sutfin, W. L. Vestal, and Wm. Weddington, J. E. Metcalf, Mr. Doty were some of those prominent in the previous organization that did not become Universalists. Mr. Vestal repeatedly stated, nevertheless, that only the friendliest feelings were entertained. Mr. Sutfin had been the president while the building was being erected.]

The Rev. Herbert Whitney was called to lead the newly reorganized parish. They were very active socially, culturally and in sponsoring community reforms. Both pastor and parish shared a pleasant and profitable two years.⁴⁵

⁴⁴

Ibid., Feb. 23, 1881.

⁴⁵

Ibid., March 1, 1881 - Feb. 22, 1883.

* Names of charter members are given in the appendix.

In April, 1883 they invited the Rev. Charles L. Waite of Orange, Massachusetts to fill the vacancy in the ministry. "The Christian Leader" reads:

"Storm Lake is one of the most important stations in Iowa, second only to Dubuque. Our parish there has called a minister whom they never saw, purely on his record. We are happy to assure our friends of Storm Lake that they have secured one of our most thoughtful and accomplished ministers ... one who will put his thoughts into felicitous literary form and one too who will put his heart into his work."⁴⁶

He was an unusually able young man; during his two-year pastorate he bought the lot adjoining the church, built a parsonage on it, entertained the State Convention and publicized it well; The Sunday School became one of the largest and best in the city, and the ladies gave a number of varied fairs each of which netted from one to four hundred dollars. He was offered a position as managing editor of the Universalist, which was published in Chicago. However, he felt he could not leave this parish without giving them three months notice and the paper needed an editor at once; so, he remained in Storm Lake. In May, 1885 he did accept a call from the Universalist Church in Monroe, Wisconsin.⁴⁷

The Rev. M. H. Houghton was with them for two years and was forced to leave because of ill health. Dr. J. W. Hanson was invited to become their pastor in 1888. After giving it consideration he apparently refused,

⁴⁶ Ibid., April 5, 1883.

⁴⁷ Ibid., May 3, 1883 - May 21, 1885.

because the Rev. W. S. Ralph accepted a call January 1, 1889. The church was credited at that time with the large membership of seventy-five. He was succeeded by the Rev. J. E. Keyes and the Rev. C. E. Varney; the Rev. John Arnoup came in 1895; the Rev. George Skilling in 1896; the Revs. Rett E. and Margaret Olmstead were the pastors from 1898 to 1900. The latter were also pastors of the church at Albert Lea, Minnesota at the same time.⁴⁸

In 1885 among the membership of this church were these men prominent also in their community, Col. Vestal, editor of the Storm Lake "Pilot", and later postmaster; James Toy and J. A. Dean were supervisors; Mr. Toy was also the local banker, and Mr. Dean kept and bound all the local papers and presented them to the Iowa Historical Library; Robinson and Milchrist were a firm of attorneys; The Robinson and Toy families moved to Sioux City, which removed from this parish those most able financially to carry the burdens of a church organization. James Harker, one of the earliest leaders, had passed away during the pastorate of the Rev. Mr. Waite.

The ladies were exceedingly active in this parish. In describing a forthcoming fair at which they netted \$365 the "Pilot" remarked that "were it not for the ladies there would not be much church work done and it is their busy brain and willing hands that provide for many

of the little and some of the large extras."⁴⁹ In 1890 the men had a very active club which was not a money raising association; but, which had a monthly dinner where a guest speaker was the special feature, among whom, on several occasions, was the noted Rev. Mary A. Safford, the Unitarian pastor at Sioux City.⁵⁰

Knoxville

"A Society of Universalists was organized in 1870 [at Knoxville]. A house of worship was never built, and after a few years the group was disbanded."⁵¹ Services under the leadership of the Revs. Fidelia Gillette, W. C. Brooks and Isa A. Eberhart were held in the Adventist's church.

Dexter

About that same time mission work was being done in Dexter. In 1879 there was a neat little Universalist church building but there was no organization or preaching by that denomination.⁵² The ministers appear to have been active, but the "good seed" did not bear fruit, whether it was because of the poor soil or the inadequate tending is an uncertainty.

⁴⁹ Ibid., Nov. 22, 1883.

⁵⁰ Ibid., June 19, 1889 & Jan. 1, 1890.

⁵¹ History of Marion County, Iowa, Chicago, 1915, p. 288.

⁵² History of Dallas County, Iowa, Des Moines, 1879, p. 342.

Lehigh

The Universalist Church at Lehigh was organized in 1870. Ten years later a building was erected at a cost of sixteen hundred dollars. In 1893 they had a membership of forty. The Rev. Aaron Smith lived for many years in this locality. In 1894 he died at the age of eighty-two. Thirty years before he had been ordained in the Universalist ministry. He appeared to have been a self-supporting missionary since there was no record of any pastorate which he had held. Shortly after the death of the Rev. Mr. Smith, the church ceased to function as an active organization.⁵³

Maquoketa

Maquoketa was early a locality where Universalists were found, and a preaching site for the circuit riders. In 1849 and 1850 they were hosts to the Iowa Convention of Universalists. There must have been a society in those days although there was no definite record of its existence, except that implied by the sessions of the Convention. In 1870 they were reorganized (or organized) and appeared as Convention members receiving fellowship. Three years later there were sixteen families in the parish and there were fifty-five members of the Sunday School. The group was then active for approximately fifteen years.⁵⁴

⁵³ Universalist Register and Almanac, Boston, 1889, 1893.

⁵⁴ I. U. C., President's Notebook, and Universalist Register and Almanac, Boston, 1873.

Nevada

A Universalist Society in Nevada was formally organized in 1871, but had received Convention fellowship in the previous year. In 1873 there were ten families in the parish, fifty children in the Sunday School and their half-time pastor was the Rev. C. P. Nash. They were represented in the annual session of the Convention until 1892.⁵⁵ It was doubtless sustained after 1875 by the Rev. W. P. Payne, who became a resident of the community, first as the principal of the public schools, and later as the owner and editor of the Nevada Representative.⁵⁶ Nevada remained his home until his death in 1921.⁵⁷

Clinton

In 1871 a Universalist church was organized under the leadership of ^{the} Rev. R. G. Hamilton. ~~and~~ A frame house of worship was erected at the corner of Fourth Street and Fourth Avenue on Clinton Park and christened "Murray Church". It was a beautiful example of Gothic architecture with arched ceiling, heavy Gothic doors and circular pews. William Taylor and Luke Roberts were two of the charter members. The Rev. Mary Garard was one of the last pastors.

After several years the society disbanded and the

⁵⁵ I.U.C., President's Notebook.

⁵⁶ History of Story County, Iowa, Chicago, 1911, Vol. 2, p. 33.

⁵⁷ Edgar R. Harlan, "Notable Death," Annals of Iowa, (3), Vol. 14, (1923-1925) p. 159.

building was leased to other religious bodies. In 1879 it was rented by the Apostolic Church of God.⁵⁸ It was later sold to the Catholic denomination and the money turned over to Mr. Taylor, who doubtless was the Treasurer of the Society.⁵⁹ It was last represented in the Convention in 1904.

Bloomfield

"Followers of this faith have been in this county from the start. The subject of Universal salvation has caused discussion with the other denominations from an early day. Public debates occurred frequently and caused considerable interest. The discussions were generally advertised and well attended. The Rev. Thomas Ballenger, later of Oskaloosa for years, seemed to represent the Universalist belief and was its ready champion. Along in the seventies a joint public debate was arranged between members of the Universalist faith and members of the Methodist church in Bloomfield, to be held in the Methodist church building in Bloomfield."⁶⁰

Following this religious controversy known locally as the "Battle of the Giants" in which ^{the} Rev. Mr. Hughey, a Methodist from Illinois debated with ^{the} Rev. Mr. Hughes, a Universalist of the same state; and largely as a result of it; a Universalist Society was organized on January 23, 1872, with twenty-two charter members. A brick church was begun that year which cost \$2,100. It was dedicated April 6, 1873 by the Rev. John Hughes, one of the contestants in the "Battle of the Giants."

⁵⁸ History of Clinton County, Iowa, Chicago, 1879, p.517.

⁵⁹ Olive Barker, Clinton, Iowa to Elva Tucker, July, 1943.

⁶⁰ Federated Women's Clubs of Davis County, A Pioneer History of Davis County, Bloomfield, 1924-27, p. 224.

Prior to 1882 they had had as pastors the Revs. T. H. Tabor and E. L. Briggs; and the incumbent one, the Rev. Dr. Barry, was described as "one of the noblest of God's ministers on earth," At that time they had sixty members.⁶¹ Later preachers included the Revs. John Hughes, E. L. Briggs, B. F. Snook, H. Lwellen, L. S. and Charlotte Porter, Dr. Geddes and occasionally the Revs. Kate Hughes, Dr. C. E. Nash, Dr. Keyes, Dr. Erasmus Manford, W. P. Payne of Mitchell Seminary, Mr. J. R. Baker, Manning Hull and Dr. J. W. Hansen were heard.⁶²

In June 1888 R. S. Galer, the principal of the Southern Iowa Normal School at Bloomfield, preached the Baccalaureate sermon for the School's graduating class.⁶³ He later moved to Mt. Pleasant where he practised law, married the Rev. Laura Bowman and affiliated with the Universalist church.

Wilton or Wilton Junction

Wilton was the site of a Universalist Society. They never acquired a church, but Mrs. Mary L. Pingree was a member and the Rev. E. L. Briggs was active in that locality. He taught a Bible Class in her home. Mrs. Pingree was no doubt the leader of the group. Her interest and generosity were revealed by her gifts to other churches

⁶¹ History of David County, Iowa, Des Moines, 1882, p. 575.

⁶² Federated Women's Clubs, op. cit. p. 224 and Davis County Republican (Bloomfield) 1873-1888.

⁶³ Davis County Republican (Bloomfield), June 21, 1888.

in the state, after her own group had faded into oblivion. In 1898 or 1899 she presented the church at Cedar Rapids with two thousand dollars⁶⁴ and in 1904 she bequeathed three thousand dollars to the State Convention.⁶⁵ The Wilton society was recorded as having existed for approximately fourteen years. (1872-1886)

Webster City

Judge J. L. Kamrar recalls the Webster City of the 1870's as "a hamlet of not more than five hundred people, a half a dozen churches and as many saloons."⁶⁶

"The lot on the corner of Bank and Willson Streets which later became the site of the Universalist Church was occupied by a one story frame blacksmith shop surrounded by ponds and sloughs. Bank Street was losing out as the principal business street of our growing town. Seneca Street was becoming the favorite, and the so called 'up and down town' fight was on. The bloody noses and faces of our leading citizens could be seen on election day about the old frame Court House on the corner of Bank and Seneca streets. The Willsons and Funks were struggling to build the town in the swamps around where the Willson House now stands."⁶⁷

Sometime about 1872 the Iowa Universalist Convention sent the Rev. B. F. Snook to this bumptious, expanding, pioneer village on the Boone River in North Central Iowa,

"to hold a series of religious meetings. The services were so well attended and created such enthusiasm among those who were inclined toward a liberal

⁶⁴ W.A.W. Argow, An Historical Sketch of the Peoples Church, p. 8 (ms).

⁶⁵ I.U.C., Secretary's Record, Vol. 3, p. 172.

⁶⁶ Webster City Daily News, June 16, 1924.

⁶⁷ Ibid.

faith, that Mr. Snook was prevailed upon to return at a later date to give another series of sermons. It was during his second visit that plans were made for a permanent organization and on January 24, 1875 the Universalist Church of Webster City was founded. [The] Rev. B. F. Snook became [the] pastor of the newly formed church,"⁶⁸ so he can rightly be called the father of this church.

Judge Kamrar said,

"I distinctly recall my introduction to Rev. B. F. Snook I was walking along the principal business street of our then little town on a wintry morning [in January 1874]. Approaching me came two quite distinguished looking gentlemen. I soon recognized one of them to be my neighbor and life long personal friend, Col. Charles A. Clark, then a struggling young attorney, afterward a great lawyer of more than state wide reputation. The Colonel introduced his companion in his usual jovial and witty way, as Rev. B. F. Snook, a Universalist preacher, a friend of his for whom he could vouch, adding that Mr. Snook believed, that if he could get some of the liberal people here to take hold with him and help organize and build a Universalist Church that some of us sinners could at least get a hearing at the Throne of St. Peter, before being cast out into utter darkness forever. Mr. Snook joined in the spirit of good feeling which dominated the meeting. We went our way, but the smiling face and helpful words kindly spoken by him, made me his warm friend and supporter through his life of splendid Christian citizenship and work among us. St. Paul's Universalist Church of Webster City, Iowa owes more to him than we have or can ever repay."⁶⁹

"The new organization set at once about raising funds to build a church for their future work. A lot at the corner of Bank Street and Willson Avenue was purchased and a wooden church building was erected which was considered at that time one of the finest in the city. This church was dedicated on November 14, 1875. The dedicatory sermon was preached by the Rev. Dr. J. W. Hanson of Chicago. A quartette, composed of Mrs. Mary Jane Young, a Mrs. Patton, Mr. Peleg C. Babcock and a Mr. Tracey, furnished the music and these same singers gave the church musical

⁶⁸ Dr. Effie McCollum Jones, Brief History of St. Paul's Universalist Church, Webster City, Iowa. (MS).

⁶⁹ Webster City Daily News, June 16, 1924.

service of outstanding worth for a long while.

"A Sunday School was formed very soon after the organization and has always been actively functioning, though with varying degrees of success, of course. A Ladies' Society was also founded and has remained active through the whole seventy years and it is still carrying on, tho' with a greatly different program than in early years. Then it was the custom to serve meals to make money, have bazaars that represented vast amounts of work but also brought vast sums of money for those times. Gradually these methods of raising funds for the church support were modified. In recent years no meals were served for pay. A few Family Night suppers were held each year for friendly acquaintance and fellowship. There was a strong missionary leadership and the society met twice each month except in midsummer.

"During the years of Mr. Snook's pastorate he took a vacation for six months and travelled in Europe, spending a month in the Holy Land, a part of the world seldom visited by Americans at that time. His trip was a great event and when he returned he divided his time between preaching in the Webster City church and lecturing about his travels in any place to which he was called to lecture. He had been pastor of this church eight years.

"Mr. Snook resigned in 1883 and was followed by the Rev. S.R.H. Biggs, who remained for one year. During Mr. Biggs' pastorate the organization of a church as a spiritual society was begun. For many years there was the dual form of organization - a parish group which handled all the business details of church administration; and a church group which was held to be a purely religious organization. It will be seen, when it is realized that people who were not specially interested in the religious affairs of the church could be members of the parish and control the material affairs of the group, that a way was opened for difficulties that sometimes seemed serious. It was many years before this dual plan was abandoned here but in recent years the organization consisted altogether of actual members of the church.

"Because of this arrangement, the earliest membership lists bear the date of 1884. But the list of men and women interested and active in the new movement is not only a long one, but it carries the names of many of the most influential families in the thriving young community. Among these were such people as Mr. and Mrs. Kendall Young whose estate

later gave the city its beautiful Public Library and the extensive Kendall Young Park, as well as the notable Woman's Club House, known as the Jane Young House; Mr. and Mrs. F. D. Young, the latter being a member of the quartette that sang at the dedication services in the church; Mr. & Mrs. Bradford Mason, Mr. & Mrs. Rome H. Woodworth, whose daughter, Mrs. R. H. Woodworth, of Port Arthur, Texas, has kept in touch with this church and served it in many gracious ways and who, with her daughter, Miss Phebe Woodworth, in 1942 gave the church its fine electric organ; Mr. & Mrs. E.S. Wheeler; Mr. & Mrs. Sumler Willson; Mr. & Mrs. William Crosley; Col. & Mrs. Charles A. Clark; Mr. & Mrs. J. P. Clagg; Mr. and Mrs. R. I. Burlison; Mr. & Mrs. L. L. Treat; Mr. & Mrs. W. B. Howard; Mr. & Mrs. George F. Hathway; Mr. & Mrs. Alonzo Thompson; Mr. & Mrs. Peleg Babcock, the former being a member of that dedication service quartette; Judge and Mrs. J. L. Kamrar; Mr. & Mrs. J. W. Young; Mr. & Mrs. Edward Mabbott; Mr. & Mrs. William Ellis; Mr. & Mrs. Warren Worthington; Mr. & Mrs. George F. Richardson; Mr. & Mrs. William Brown; Mrs. Jane Sheldon and her sister, Mrs. Maria Warren. As this list has been handed down largely by memory it is doubtless not at all complete.

"Most of these persons, active during the first ten years of the life of the church, presented themselves for membership when the spiritual society was formed, tho' some of the early workers had died or removed to other places. After Mr. Biggs resigned in 1883, the Rev. W. W. Nutting was asked to become pastor and he stayed for several years but left the church under some painful circumstances, which are not described in the minutes but are a matter of record.

"The Rev. Amos Crum was called in June 1888, coming from the church in Dubuque. His salary was to be \$1500.00 a year - the first mention of salary in this history. His pastorate was unusually successful, many new members united with the church. Records were made of regular communion service each quarter, of various special services, of generous decorations for many of these services, and especially the lists of members were carefully kept.

"On June 15, 1890, the congregation and minister went to a grove on the John Carey farm, about nine miles south of Webster City, where they held an all-day outdoor meeting. Mr. Crum preached three sermons, a basket dinner was enjoyed and the minutes state that 'about 1000 people were present at these services.' On August 10 the experience was repeated,

the outdoor services being held this time on the 'premises of Mr. M. Mickelson eight miles north of Webster City.' Mr. Crum preached in the morning and the Rev. W. S. Ralph in the afternoon, while both these ministers spoke at an evening meeting. The record says that 'A good audience was present from the city and the surrounding region.' Also that 'The interest was strong and extensive and expressions of pleasure in the services and desire for other occasions of a similar nature were numerous. By this liberal policy in inviting the outlying neighborhoods does St. Paul's church extend a knowledge of its doctrines. It is purposed to hold an out-door meeting in or near Webster City during the fall of each year to which all neighborhoods in the County will be invited.'

"The Rev. Mr. Crum resigned from this pastorate July 31, 1890, to go back to his former parish in Dubuque, after just two years service in Webster City. He had done such excellent work in and for the church and the community that it was not easy to find a successor to him, but the Rev. B. F. Snook, founder of the parish and greatly loved by its people, came in October, 1890 and remained for another two years, during which time the church grew and prospered. When he left at the end of two years, Mr. Crum was prevailed on to come back again and began this second pastorate Nov. 27th, 1892, the pulpit having been supplied several Sundays by the Rev. F. M. Yates. By this time the church had an active Young People's Christian Union and all auxiliaries were in a flourishing condition.

"On June 25 services in the church were omitted and the congregation and its auxiliaries took part in a basket meeting on Charles Doolittle's farm, four miles north of Webster City. Mr. Crum preached twice to good acceptance, and the Y.P.C.U. gave an entertainment called 'Barbara's Dream'. The usual Y.P.C.U. meeting, doubtless devotional, was held. It was a day of rare and peculiar influence. Audiences of several hundred people were present."

"Mr. Crum preached not only in the Webster City church but in the Saratoga school-house, in the Doolittle school, later in a hall in Woolstock and wherever a door was opened for his services. Echoes of his influence are still heard often and from people whose lives have been far away from any regular Universalist services. Mr. Crum's second pastorate in Webster City came to a close with October, 1897. After he left a number of ministers supplied the pulpit,- the Revs. E. E. Hammand, 'late of California',

Charles Graves & Mr. Bashor, as well as Dr. N. L. Sage.

"In April Dr. Crum was urged to come back and take charge of the congregation while the old church building, now felt to be inadequate for the work they wanted to do, was being remodelled. This was Dr. Crum's third pastorate. He preached a farewell sermon to the old church, after which services were held in Willson's Hall and other places until they could again be accommodated in the rennovated church. The wooden walls had been veneered with brick, the floor made sloping, the pulpit placed in the west end of the church and a good-sized lecture room opened in the north part of the building."⁷⁰

Stained glass windows depicting Biblical scenes were presented in memory of Roy Clagg, Mrs. J. D. Sketchley, Mrs. Jane Young and Mrs. Maria Mason.⁷¹ Dr. F. J. Drake, J. W. Young and J. R. White painstakingly planned and supervised this reconstruction.⁷²

"This new church was re-dedicated on October 23, 1898, the sermon being preached by Dr. J. S. Cantwell, of Chicago. [In the evening both the Rev. B. F. Snook and the Rev. Amos Crum spoke at the vesper service.] Later on a series of services was held in the church with the Revs. J. H. Palmer, of Cedar Rapids; Sophie Gibbs, of Boone; B. F. Snook, of Wausau, Wisconsin; and A. R. Tillinghast, of Waterloo participating and Dr. C. Elwood Nash, president of Lombard College, in Galesburg, Illinois preaching two powerful sermons at the close, and thus was ended the period of re-dedication exercises. Dr. Crum felt that he had done the task for which he was recalled and he severed his connection with the church on Sunday, November 3, 1899.

"Then began the pastorate of the Rev. Charles Graves. He stayed but four months, the minutes showing no reason for his departure. Dr. Crum came back to preach the Baccalaureate sermon before the graduating class of the local schools on the last Sunday in May, 1899. The Rev. Frank H. York had candidated in the church two Sundays in April and began his

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Dr. Effie McCollum Jones, History of St. Paul's Universalist Church, (ms.).

⁷¹

Webster City Daily News, June 16, 1924.

⁷²

Webster City Freeman, October 26, 1898.

pastorate on the first Sunday in June, 1899. He stayed until August 1, 1900."⁷³

This church had some unusually strong ministers and for longer pastorates than was the average in the state at that time. Both Mr. Snook and Dr. Crum, the two who were closest to the parish for the longest periods, were scholarly and eloquent men of high character, recognized throughout the state as bulwarks of the faith. Judge Kamrar said of their ministers, "We are proud of them and Webster City is and has been a better place to live in because they lived with us."⁷⁴

Algona

The "Universalist Church was organized by [the Rev.] H. B. Butler in 1873 and the services were held in the Baptist Church, with thirteen members. Mr. Butler was a minister of fine ability and [exerted] a helpful influence in the community. All classes had a reverential respect for him to a degree seldom accorded to a pastor. He remained at the head of the church for about four years and then went elsewhere to preach. He was followed by the Rev. [O.F.] Van Cise, who held services at Watson Hall. Gradually the church became transformed into one indorsing the Unitarian principles and was organized as such."⁷⁵

It ceased to exist many years ago. The last connection it had with the Iowa Convention was in 1892.⁷⁶

Belle Plaine

Although the State Secretarial records show that

⁷³ Jones, History of St. Paul's Universalist Church,
op. cit.

⁷⁴ Webster City Daily News, June 16, 1924.

⁷⁵ The History of Kossuth County, Iowa, Chicago, 1913,
p. 504.

⁷⁶ I.U.C., President's Notebook.

the Belle Plaine Society was begun on or before 1867, there is no written account of it until about seven years later.

"This Society was organized December 26, 1874. Mr. Bickford was elected President; J. F. Roberts, Clerk; H. Aulbrook, Treasurer; J. B. Marston, J. D. Wilson, H. Gardner, Trustees. Three persons added their names to the roll during the meeting. The Rev. I. A. Eberhart, who had been mainly instrumental in forming the church, was immediately engaged as pastor.

"December 15, 1875, a conference meeting of the Universalist ministers in the adjacent territory was held at Belle Plaine. About the same time, Rev. J. A. Hoyt became pastor of the Society, remaining until December 31, 1876, when he preached his farewell sermon. Rev. I. A. Eberhart was immediately recalled to his former charge."

In 1878 the Society had twenty members. Meetings were held at the Grange Hall. The Rev. Mr. Eberhart was Superintendent of the Sunday School; J. F. Roberts was the Secretary and Librarian.⁷⁷

About nine years later the group was mentioned as never attaining a large membership.⁷⁸ In 1887 the State Convention records show that the group had disbanded. H. Roy Mosnat, an attorney, wrote in 1943, that "there had not been any Universalist church here for many years past," and that none of those associated with it were living in that community.⁷⁹

Castalia

A Universalist Church was built in 1875 one half

⁷⁷ History of Benton County, Iowa, Chicago, 1878, p.449.

⁷⁸ Portrait & Biographical Album of Benton County, Iowa, Chicago, 1887, p. 414.

⁷⁹ H. Roy Mosnat, Belle Plaine, Iowa, to Elva Tucker, Cedar Falls, Iowa, May 6, 1943.

mile west of Castalia. Mrs. Ward M. (Fanny) Allen wrote; "My people were early pioneers of that vicinity and my grandparents (Cornell) were among the group which brought about the building of this church. A well-to-do man of that neighborhood, a Mr. Nathan Peckham [came] to Iowa from Hartford, Connecticut, [and] was one of the leaders in the project."⁸⁰ (The same Mr. Peckham bequeathed one thousand dollars to the Iowa Ministerial Pension Fund.) The building was erected, donated and kept in repair by the Peckham family. Dr. Effie McCollum Jones has described it as a family chapel - there never was a real church organization. Mrs. Ward continues, "As I remember going to this church with my parents in the early 1890's my recollections are that there never was a large congregation [about twenty members] and I believe no resident minister. When I was a child I remember a Rev. Matt Wing who came occasionally to hold services." Among the leaders in this small parish were the Peckhams, Harveys, Andersons, Knights, Vances, Clarks, Richards and Cornells.

They were last reported in the State Convention in 1896.⁸¹

New Sharon

The Society at New Sharon was first recognized in the Universalist fellowship in 1875.

⁸⁰ Mrs. Ward M. Allen, Ossian, Iowa, to Elva Tucker, Cedar Falls, Iowa, May 16, 1943.

⁸¹ I.U.C., President's Notebook.

"A building under the control of the denomination, Universalist, was built in New Sharon, in 1877. The city contains quite a large element of those who are called liberal in religious thought, and the occasion of the building of this church was the refusal of an orthodox pulpit to one of their ministers.

"The platform on which the church was erected, was that it should be forever equally free to all denominations. Until August, 1878 it has been a house of worship of what was termed a 'Universalist Parish', which was at the time of the meeting in New Sharon of the State Universalist Association in that month changed to a church organization.

"The building is a neat frame structure costing three thousand dollars and is free from debt. In October following its erection, [the] Rev. Fidelia [W.] Gillette commenced to occupy the pulpit, which she continued to do every alternate Sabbath. She was a smart, well educated, [woman] and a fine speaker and she preached eloquently to the satisfaction of her congregation in New Sharon. She received six hundred [dollars] annually for the alternate Sabbath preaching."

She came from Michigan "and is said to have been for twenty years in the employ of the National Lecture Association and recently entered the ministry for conscientious reasons."⁸² This church was last represented in the convention in 1896. Four years later there were eighteen Universalist families residing in the community.

West Union

The Rev. J. J. Austin was the pioneer Universalist minister in the West Union community. He was active there in 1881,⁸³ and in either that year or the following one a society was organized, for delegates first appeared

⁸² History of Mahaska County, Iowa, Des Moines, 1878, p. 512.

⁸³ The Argo (West Union), Sept. 21, 1881.

in the Iowa Convention in 1882.⁸⁴

In the fall of 1883 the Rev. C. T. Irish, their first regular pastor, held services in Zeigler Hall.⁸⁵ He remained for about one year. Intermittent services were held by visiting ministers, Superintendent B. Brunning, the Rev. B. C. Rogers and the Rev. W. A. Pratt, in the Presbyterian, Methodist and Baptist churches. During this pastorless period they entertained the Turkey River Association in the Presbyterian church, and the Rev. Mary Garard of Clinton was a guest speaker.⁸⁶ During 1886 and 1887 they held services in the Court House under the leadership of the Rev. James Gorton. In the spring of the latter year the Rev. W. A. Pratt of Cedar Rapids and the Rev. Amos Crum of Dubuque held a series of meetings.⁸⁷

The last Sunday in May they organized a Sunday School. By 1890 it had a membership of eleven. A lady in Chicago had given them a library for the children.⁸⁸

"All are aware that the Universalists of this city have for some time been contemplating the building of a fine church, having been left a legacy by the late Ira [and Silenda] Burbank. Since the coming of the Rev. James Gorton among us that purpose has taken a more definite shape, and plans for the building have been prepared by Cedar Rapids architects..

⁸⁴ I.U.C., President's Notebook.

⁸⁵ The Argo, Sept. 26, 1883.

⁸⁶ Ibid., Dec. 17, 1884.

⁸⁷ Ibid., March 23, 1887.

⁸⁸ Ibid., June 1, 1887.

"The specifications are for a building in the Queen Anne style, forty feet square in the clear, and without steeple. To be of white brick with ornamentation of red brick above the basement and the windows. In the basement will be Sunday School rooms, parlor, library, kitchen and coal room. The upper floor will contain an audience room with a seating capacity of about two hundred. The floor of the auditorium will be raised, sloping upwards towards the rear of the hall, and it will be seated with opera chairs. The entrance will be on the northeast corner. The church is to be located on the corner of Vine and Plumb streets, opposite the old Argo office.

"The building will be ... unlike anything in the city or this part of the state. We hope the society may see their way clear to begin building operations at once."⁸⁹

In spite of the well wishes they were unable to begin actual building operations at once; however, they did the following spring and the edifice was completed in December, 1888 at a cost of ninety-five hundred dollars.⁹⁰ The Rev. Mr. Gorton, who had done such a splendid work in leading the small group into active church life, while meeting at the Court House, did not remain with them long enough to see the new church home rise.⁹¹ The Rev. Matt Wing became their pastor and remained two years. The Argo describes him as

"an original and profound thinker and a ready and pleasant speaker. He never writes his discourses but his utterances flow smoothly and with deliberation, never hurried, disconnected, hesitating or ungrammatical. The society is united, enthusiastic and active in Sunday School and all church and society work. It is rare to find a society more pleasantly situated."⁹²

⁸⁹ Ibid., Aug. 10, 1887.

⁹⁰ Ibid., Dec. 19, 1888.

⁹¹ Ibid., Dec. 14, 1887.

⁹² Ibid., July 10, 1889.

The Rev. J. W. Hansen, D.D., of Chicago came to deliver the dedicatory sermon in December, which was a candid interpretation of Universalism. Judge J. W. Rogers, the president of the society, then took the platform and "read an address in memory of the free hearted donors of the beautiful structure; the generous and munificent gift of Ira Burbank, with the willing and hearty concurrence of his wife Silenda. Both believed in the universal salvation of mankind, hence we dedicate this temple to their memory..."⁹³ That fall the Universalist Convention met in the attractive new church building. Plans were made to increase the state missionary work and to encourage young people to enter the ministry.⁹⁴

The Rev. H. Lewellen was the pastor for a year in 1893, he then accepted a call to Lafayette, Indiana. The editor of the Argo wrote of him, "He is a deep student and thinker and a man thoroughly posted on theological matters of the day. The family will be greatly missed from the social circles of the city and all will join... in wishing them abundant prosperity in their new home."⁹⁵

For the next four years they never had a full time pastor; the Rev. Matt Wing or Dr. Amos Crum were there much more than anyone else. However, the Reverends John Arnoup, H. L. F. Gillespie, W. J. Herbener, J. H. Palmer,

⁹³ Ibid., Dec. 19, 1888.

⁹⁴ Ibid., Oct. 2, 1889.

⁹⁵ Ibid., May 16, 1894.

and J. L. Dinsmore filled the pulpit occasionally.⁹⁶ Miss Harriet I. Baker became their pastor in 1898, and remained two years and during this time she was ordained. She was a splendid leader of the young people. All the church auxiliaries were active, and the future looked very bright for them until Miss Baker resigned prior to her marriage.⁹⁷ The church had enjoyed the usual number of fairs, suppers and socials where the ladies of the church tried to support the church and their pastor. West Union was unusually slow in organizing a Ladies Aid Society. It was accomplished in May, 1898⁹⁸ during one of those pastorless intervals, when Dr. Crum, as State Superintendent, was there frequently for services and supervising their parish activities. One of their first projects was the redecoration of the interior of the church.⁹⁹

This parish had been rather fortunate inasmuch as their beautiful church was a gift; they appear to have enjoyed the pastorate of a number of able men; and when leaderless, the ministers from nearby parishes helped them to hold reasonably regular services.

In 1898 the Universalist church received a bequest from David Bell of fifteen hundred dollars (and so did each of the West Union Churches) "on the terms that each

⁹⁶ Ibid., June 6, 1894 - Nov. 16, 1898.

⁹⁷ Ibid., Oct. 3, 1900.

⁹⁸ Ibid., May 4, 1898.

⁹⁹ Ibid., Aug. 10, 1898.

one of the churches shall choose two of their best and safest men to loan out that money in the safest place and to use the interest to pay their ministers and for nothing else." J. H. Colby and J. T. Riley were appointed the trustees for the fund.¹⁰⁰

Some of the leaders in this parish were stable, respected citizens in the community; such as; Ira and Silenda Burbank, Mr. and Mrs. J. W. Ainsworth, Josephine Ainsworth, Thomas D. Reeder, Isabella Reeder, Judge J. W. Rogers, Helen Frolich, N. C. Spencer, James F. Smith, R. A. Barr, Carrie Whitmore, A. Y. Whitmore, J. B. Herriman, V. N. Brown, James Colby, and J. T. Riley.¹⁰¹

Otranto

"This Society was incorporated under the name 'The First Universalist Parish of Otranto' in what was then known as the village of Bartlett's Grove. It was first mentioned in the State Convention in 1883 and was incorporated and fellowshipped in the same year. In 1884 a frame church was built which was valued at \$1,000. This Society grew to be one of a good size and was quite active."¹⁰²

In 1900 when the Osage Society called the Rev. S. L. Taylor they mentioned that they would provide five hundred and fifty dollars of his salary and that this parish would provide one hundred fifty.¹⁰³ How long this

¹⁰⁰
Notes of the State Treasurer, Henry H. Griffith, 1934.

¹⁰¹
Interview with Frank Camp, a life long resident of West Union.

¹⁰²
Dr. Effie McCollum Jones, Brief History of the First Universalist Church of Otranto, Iowa, (manuscript).

¹⁰³
The First Universalist Church of Osage, Iowa, Clerk's Record, Vol. I, p. 73.

arrangement for co-operating in the support of a pastor for the two parishes had been functioning is unknown, but it continued for a number of years thereafter.

Ossian

Mrs. Ward M. Allen recalls that a church was built here around 1891.

"I remember coming to services in it several times and it was served by a Rev. [Dr.] Crum who also preached in some other location. They never had a resident minister I don't believe this church flourished over ten years, if it lasted that long." Some of the families in this church were Mills, Webster, Pegg, Schoonmaker, Sawyer and Elridge.¹⁰⁴

Charles City

The movement in Charles City was begun by Mr. and Mrs. John Owen from Maine. Others who joined the Society were Miss Emma Sylvester, E. J. Fisher, Dr. Bishop, Mr. and Mrs. Clayton Henry, Mr. and Mrs. Daly and daughters, Clara and Agnes, Mr. and Mrs. Julius Sterns, Mr. and Mrs. Black, Mrs. Barney, Mrs. McCallar, Mr. and Mrs. W. H. Griswold, Mr. and Mrs. Josiah Billings, Mrs. W. C. Hering, Mrs. L. H. Henry, Mrs. Goddard, Mrs. Reka Cole, Mr. and Mrs. Sam Sloan, Mr. and Mrs. Woodhouse, Mr. and Mrs. Hildreth, Mrs. Slaughter, Mrs. Lindeman, Mrs. Behrens and her daughters Mathilda, Eda and Clara and Mrs. Lew Landers. The church was organized and fellowshipped in 1891. The Rev. A. C. Grier was their first pastor who remained for four or five

¹⁰⁴

Mrs. Ward M. Allen to Elva Tucker, May 16, 1943.

years. He and his wife were young and enthusiastic. The Society met in the old stone Christian church and in a hall above a store down town.

After having a substitute for a few months the Rev. John Mulholland came. He was well liked and gave wonderful sermons. After he left they never had a minister that people liked or who could keep up enthusiasm.¹⁰⁵ Under his leadership they built their church building which was completed and dedicated April 28, 1895, as "All Souls" church.¹⁰⁶

They had wonderful times socially and worked hard to raise the necessary funds. Their church was never popular in the community, so it was hard to keep their young people.

The Rev. H. L. Thornton of Lapier, Michigan followed the Rev. Mr. Mulholland as a pastor for a short time. The Rev. J. R. Sage was the last to serve regularly. During the latter part of the century the Rev. Mr. and Mrs. Jones and Dr. Amos Crum came occasionally.¹⁰⁷

Of the churches begun in the last decade the only ones to have more than a year or two of history were Charles City, Iowa Falls, Northwood and Shenandoah; and these were active for only about a decade. None of them were located in a small Iowa village so a better record might have been

¹⁰⁵ Interview with Miss Louise Hering, a life long resident of Charles City and a member of the Universalist Church, 1943.

¹⁰⁶ Mrs. M. W. Sharman, Descanso, Calif. to Elva Tucker, Cedar Falls, Iowa, Aug. 29, 1943.

¹⁰⁷ Conversation with Miss Louise Hering.

expected of these last named societies.

Iowa Falls

In Iowa Falls a group was organized in 1891, by the Rev. T. E. Dotter. In March, 1892 a series of meetings was held in the rink by Dr. Amos Crum of Dubuque, the Rev. B. F. Snook, of Webster City, and the Rev. L. F. Porter of Waterloo.¹⁰⁸ During that week a subscription list was started for the building of a church. Over one thousand dollars was pledged that day, and several valuable pieces of property were offered.¹⁰⁹ Mrs. Sarah M. Estes, the wife of one of the founders of Iowa Falls, gave the lot on the corner of Main and Rocksylvania, facing Estes Park, where the church was built. Mrs. Estes parents were Universalists in New Hampshire.¹¹⁰

The Sunday School was begun in April, 1892 with a membership of thirty-five. Their first Superintendent was Frank Foster.¹¹¹ By 1893 about one hundred attended the picnic in August at Idlewild.¹¹²

On July 8th the corner stone was laid with ^{the} Rev. Amos Crum presiding. "Rev. C. B. Linn of Boston, Assistant Secretary of the General Convention, preached a brilliant

¹⁰⁸ Iowa Falls Sentinel, Feb. 2, 1892.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid., March 9, 1892.

¹¹⁰ Frank E. Foster, Iowa Falls, Iowa, to Elva Tucker, Cedar Falls, Iowa, April 8, 1943.

¹¹¹ Iowa Falls Sentinel, April 6, 1892.

¹¹² Ibid., Aug. 23, 1892.

sermon in the park on Sunday evening." Music for the occasion was furnished by The Iowa Falls Silver Band.¹¹³

August 17, 1892 a call was extended to the Rev. B. F. Snook of Webster City. He accepted and began the new pastorate in October.¹¹⁴ They were very fortunate to secure so able a leader. The Webster City Herald wrote,

"There will be universal regret in Webster City, not only among members of Rev. [Mr.] Snook's congregation, but people of all stations and beliefs will be sorry to see him leave here. He has labored with great industry and ability for his church and his Christian character has endeared him to a large circle of friends. Mr. Snook and his family are a valuable acquisition to any community and the people of Iowa Falls are to be congratulated on securing his services."¹¹⁵

The building of the church was supervised by Washington Livermore Hay. It was erected on the form of a cross and completed in December.¹¹⁶

The fifty-third annual convention of the Iowa Universalists met with this parish on September 25, 1895. The Rev. Mr. Snook's resignation also became effective that month. His pastorate had been most successful. A large public reception was given for him and the young people presented him an easy chair.¹¹⁷

Within two months the Rev. G. W. Skilling became

113

Ibid., June 29, 1892.

114

Ibid., Aug. 17, 1892.

115

Ibid., Sept. 21, 1892.

116

Frank E. Foster, Iowa Falls, Iowa to Elva Tucker, Cedar Falls, Iowa, April 8, 1943.

117

Iowa Falls Sentinel, Sept. 25, 1895.

their pastor for one year. During a pastorless interval in 1897 they appointed a committee to "secure the services of persons who may be willing to act as speakers, readers or essayists at the church on Sunday, and all persons willing to perform such services will notify Dr. J. W. Angell of that fact and also what is to be their discourse."¹¹⁸

In April, 1897, the Rev. John Mulholland, their last pastor, accepted a call to this church.¹¹⁹ He was not a very good publicity agent for there were long lapses of time without notices. On August 20, 1898 the Peoples Church held an annual meeting. This was the close of the fiscal year for the old Universalist Society and the officers re-elected were all identical with those of the previous year so that the Society must have adopted the new name but it did not alter the personnel of their membership.¹²⁰

Throughout the history of the church they held many socials, fairs, dinners and festivals for fun and to raise sufficient funds to support the parish. The Unity Club was organized with the idea that they could combine fun and funds.

Prominent people in this Society were the

"Hon. J. H. Funk, an attorney who served as the speaker of the House in the Iowa legislature; Fayette Holmes, secretary of the Farmers Mutual Insurance Company of Hardin and Franklin Counties; R. A. Feist, city assessor; George H. Wilson, implement dealer;

¹¹⁸ Ibid., Jan. 20, 1897.

¹¹⁹ Ibid., April 24, 1897.

¹²⁰ Ibid., Aug. 24, 1898.

J. M. Rinehart, merchant; G. L. Whinery, postmaster; Charles Packard, early educator and retired farmer; O. P. Lane, manufacturer; Walter Carpenter, retired farmer; George M. Tower and Allan Ivans, retired merchants;"

W. L. Hays, retired merchant; Dr. and Mrs. J. H. Foster; Dr. J. W. Angell; Levi Allinson; Mrs. Sarah M. Estes [who was always the church treasurer] ; W. J. Mix and Frank Foster. The latter wrote, "They were all respected citizens."¹²¹

Shenandoah

At Shenandoah a Universalist Church was organized in 1896 largely through the missionary work of Dr. Q. Shinn. A very attractive frame church, equipped with a pipe organ, was erected and dedicated as "The Hayden Memorial Church" since its erection was facilitated by a gift of the Hayden family, members of the parish. It was located on lots nine and ten in the Priest Addition. (The valuation in 1911 was six thousand dollars.)¹²² The Rev. Mary Garard Andrews was actively preaching in this locality and at Villisca during the last decade of the century. A Society was also organized at the latter place with a membership of about twenty-five. One was first organized there about 1869 but ceased to send delegates to the annual convention by 1874. No doubt this was a reorganization of the liberals in the that community. The membership at Shenandoah in 1900 was

¹²¹

Frank Foster, Iowa Falls, Iowa to Elva Tucker, Cedar Falls, Iowa, April 8, 1943.

¹²²

I.U.C., President's Notebook.

only sixteen.¹²³

Northwood

The Universalist Church at Northwood was organized and sustained primarily by the enthusiasm of Frank Forbes, an attorney, who became a licensed minister. No doubt Dr. Amos Crum, the State Superintendent, did some effective missionary work to get the movement started in the community. He believed wherever there was one Universalist, a church could be built around him, and he would draw others. The group appears to have been active approximately seven years, from 1897 to 1904. It was the last one organized by the denomination in Iowa.¹²⁴

If the pioneers turned to glance backward over more than a half a century of Universalism in Iowa, they could view with pride the early societies still prospering and the additions to their little family giving promise for the future in the new century. Their gains had been many, and their losses were only a minor strain in their hymn of thanksgiving. Only a few began to question with alarm the loss of such societies as Iowa City, Waverly, Belle Plaine, Tipton, Maquoketa, and Des Moines. Instead many pointed with pride to the twenty odd thriving churches and cherished the fond hope that others would be organized under the leadership of Dr. Amos Crum and the State Convention Board.

¹²³Universalist Register and Almanac, Boston, 1900.

¹²⁴I.U.C., President's Notebook.

Chapter V

INTERESTS, PROBLEMS, AND LEADERSHIP: 1870-1900

All of the Universalist parishes had similar problems whether they were in the eastern, southwestern or northwestern parts of the state. Their group was usually small, in comparison to the other groups about them. The old residents of Boone, however, say that the Universalist was the largest church with far the largest Sabbath School in the earliest days of that railroad town, when it was known as Montana. That was an advantage not too long enjoyed there and seldom elsewhere. It is the nature of liberal movements that they represent a minority. And occasionally, the individual Universalists were drawn to larger communities because of the better economic opportunities and thus deprived the churches in the small community of its leaders and financially capable supporters. This was happening in the community of Storm Lake at the close of the century and is only the forecast of the shifting of population from rural to urban centers that occurred in the twentieth century.

There were always more parishes than there were pastors. In the convention of 1884 at Storm Lake the Iowa delegation to the General Convention was commissioned "to use its influence for certain efforts looking to an increase in the ministry."¹ Meeting at West Union in 1889, the Iowa Convention again made an effort to induce as many young men and women as possible to enter their divinity schools."²

¹Storm Lake Pilot, Oct. 2, 1884.

²The Argo (West Union), Oct. 2, 1889.

Partly because of a continual scarcity and partly because of financial straits, the societies were compelled to share pastors with one or two nearby parishes. They did not always seem too happy doing this and they were continually striving to have a full-time, resident minister, or if not a full-time one, then a part time resident one. For instance, Mt. Pleasant did not retain the Rev. E. L. Briggs in 1884 because he was living in Wilton Junction and they wanted him living among them. In all other ways he was entirely satisfactory. The Rev. J. R. Sage served both Mitchellville and Mt. Pleasant in 1885 but the latter did not call him again.³ Dr. Amos Crum served both Mitchellville and Webster City from 1892-1896. The former shared a pastor most of the time during this period with some other parish or parishes.⁴

The Osage society, when unable to meet their bills released their minister, worked to pay all of their indebtedness and perhaps accumulate a little in the treasury before they called a new shepherd. It was a sound financial plan. They never found themselves so deeply indebted that they must default, as did some parishes.⁵

The raising of funds for operating the parish seemed always a problem in a small church. Iowa City rented the pews; the Mt. Pleasant board conferred with the individual members on the amount of their assessment; otherwise, they

³First Universalist Church of Mt. Pleasant, Iowa, Secretary's Record, Vol. I, pp. 171 and 224.

⁴Rev. O. G. Colegrove, Historical Sketch of the First Universalist Church, Mitchellville, Polk County, Iowa.

⁵Interview with Rev. Jennie Bartholomew Hitchcock, Osage, Iowa, July, 1943.

generally left the matter of giving to the individual conscience and to the busy hands and generous hearts of the Women's organization. The consciences were perhaps not as well trained as they should have been, for every church leaned heavily on the women's ingenuity and hard work. Every kind of festival, fair, supper, dance or excursion currently known to the time was used and it was their recreation as well as a source of revenue. Mt. Pleasant planned excursions on the railroad to Ft. Madison,⁶ while Dubuque executed them on the steamboats on the Mississippi River.⁷ The Mt. Pleasant ladies made and sold twelve gallons of apple butter at one dollar a gallon⁸; and the ladies at Waverly made and sold needlework at their fairs, one year clearing one hundred and ninety-five dollars and having left on hand about fifty dollars worth of handiwork. The ladies at Storm Lake cleared three hundred and sixty-five dollars at one of their fairs.⁹ A Universalist fair in Dubuque netted one thousand five hundred dollars.¹⁰ At West Union the Universalist minister, C. T. Irish, was given the net proceeds from the grand opening of the Woodward's Skating Rink.¹¹ And many parishes sponsored home talent musical, poetical and dramatic productions that were profitable both culturally and financially.

⁶Laura Bowman Galer, First Universalist Church of Mt. Pleasant, Iowa, Church Clubs, (Ms).

⁷Franklin T. Oldt, History of Dubuque County, Iowa, Chicago, 1911, p. 441.

⁸First Universalist Society of Mt. Pleasant, Iowa, Industrial Society, Secretary's Record.

⁹Storm Lake Pilot, Nov. 22, 1883.

¹⁰Oldt, op. cit. p. 443.

¹¹The Argo (West Union), May 21, 1884.

Permeating all of the work to raise funds, or re-decorate, or clean the church, was the wholesome good fellowship and fun. Many of their activities were purely for recreation, as when the Sunday School Association of Dubuque chartered a steamboat for the annual Sunday School picnic;¹² they had hay rack rides like the one in Mt. Pleasant where Mrs. Van Cise and Emma Brinkman were accused of breaking down their side of John Shrivvers' rack;¹³ and there were numberless picnics such as the one at Idlewilde near Iowa Falls when nearly a hundred children from five to seventy-five years attended.¹⁴ And Mrs. Ella Burleson of Webster City speaks of the ice cream festivals, strawberry suppers, and picnics with the platform dances afterward, which they enjoyed in the summer time.¹⁵ The warm good fellowship helped bind those like-minded folk in a communion long cherished.

As the adults were concerned that the youth should have wholesome recreation, they were also concerned that they must have education. Yes, education was essential to being a Universalist, for how could anyone be a seeker after truth in the Bible, in science, in literature, in philosophy, in the world about him or in life, if he could not read and reason.

No sooner was a church organized than a Sunday School was created. For the church to live the children must

¹²Oldt, op. cit. p. 441.

¹³Emma Wait to Mrs. Fred Wait, 1923.

¹⁴Iowa Falls Sentinel, Aug. 23, 1893.

¹⁵Webster City Daily News, June 16, 1924.

know for what it stood and why, and then how to live Christian lives. Many times the School continued to function when the church was pastorless because the parish felt it was the one work they could and must carry on. A church without a Sunday School was one without hope for the future.

In Dubuque a special Society was formed with dues of a dollar for the men and fifty cents for the women whose primary interest was to foster the Universalist Sunday School. In most churches those people became a part of the school themselves, not sending their children but bringing them. It was they who planned the good times for the children as described by Emma Wait from Mt. Pleasant.

"There were the Christmases when the whole front of the church was filled with a tree and your Dad or one of the other Dads was Santa Claus. When it was your Dad you felt awfully bashful when he spoke to you from his disguise. I remember the time when my Dad....started his Santa Claus journey from the belfry, climbing down to the first floor by way of the library....the whole trip being in full sight of us thrilled youngsters."¹⁶

Dr. Laura Bowman Galer has been requested many times to perform pastoral services including life's final rites for people whose only contact with a church has been the Universalist Sunday School in the nineteenth century.

The place of children in this church is illustrated by a special day in June known first as Rose Sunday which was dedicated to the children. On this day in every parish in the state, the church was elaborately and beautifully decorated with roses, other flowers and ferns. These decora-

¹⁶ Emma Wait to Mrs. Fred Wait, 1923.

tions were frequently works of art which the grownups labored many hours to create. Miss Ida Seems and her sister Mrs. Milly Jones have told how the Mitchellville church was transformed into a rose bower each year for that special day and the pictures of the interior are cherished by a number of the people.

Mitchellville was the site chosen by the Iowa Universalist Convention under the leadership of Uncle Tom Mitchell for launching a seminary for the education of boys and girls beyond the grade school in the days before there were public high schools.

February 16, 1871 the Board of Trustees met and chose their officers; Thomas Mitchell, president (appointed by the convention); J. R. Sage, Secretary; and J. D. Thompson, Treasurer. Land had been donated by Mr. Mitchell which they marketed to raise funds to make "Mitchell Seminary" a reality.¹⁷

The corner stone of the Seminary building was laid July 4, 1872 and school was opened that fall on September 15, in rooms temporarily equipped for that purpose. They were in the new building, September 18, 1873. There were seventy pupils enrolled that second year.¹⁸

The building was made of brick and stone, "eighty three feet by fifty feet, three stories high, of the composite order, [it] cost the moderate sum of \$25,000. The property of the Seminary is valued at \$35,000. [They originally planned to build three buildings.]

¹⁷New Covenant, (Chicago), Feb. 28, 1871.

¹⁸Universalist Almanac & Register, Boston, 1874, p. 91.

"To J. R. Sage....is due the credit of erecting such a fine building for so moderate a sum of money. Indeed to him belongs the credit for raising most of the funds with which the building was erected and furnished. For two years he was the executive head of the school.

"The school opened in September, 1872, under the charge of the Rev. Le Grand Powers, A. M. as Principal." [In 1874 the Rev. William Payne was the principal for one year.] "It prospered well till the effect of 'hard times' closed its doors. In 1877, the Rev. A. Vedder became its financial agent, and with the aid of the Rev. Mrs. Gillette and the generosity of Hon. Thomas Mitchell the additional \$5,000, necessary to lift the \$10,000 mortgage was pledged in June, 1878."^{19*}

The Seminary was permanently closed in 1881 because neither the State Convention nor the individual Universalists had the funds to maintain the high type of institution which they desired. The indebtedness had been fatally large from the beginning. Also the day of the Seminary was waning with the establishment of the public high school in Mitchellville and the other localities in Iowa. It had done a good work and those who had suffered most in

¹⁹ Mitchellville Index, Oct. 13, 1926.

*Trustees for 1874

Hon. Thomas Mitchell, Pres.
 Hon. J. D. Thompson, Treas.
 Rev. J. R. Sage, Financial Secretary
 Hon. M. L. Edwards
 Hon. B. F. Gue
 Rev. W. W. Merritt
 Rev. A. J. Chapin
 F. T. Upton, Esq.
 E. H. Conger, Esq.

Board of Instruction

Rev. L. G. Powers, AB, Principal
 Mrs. E. D. Brown, Lady Principal
 Mrs. A. K. Powers
 Miss Ella A. Coe
 Miss Mary Aikens
 (Universalist Almanac & Register, 1874)

mind and money— — Thomas Mitchell and J. R. Sage—did not complain of their sacrifices.

It had never been intended as a college, for the Universalists had always given their support to Lombard University in Galesburg, Illinois. A Mt. Pleasant boy, William R. Cole, had been in the first graduating class in 1856.²⁰

Erasmus Manford remarked ten years later,

"The Lombard University is located in Galesburg; and although 'University' is rather a big name for such an institution....the west is fond of high sounding names....it is an excellent school and is doing a great work. It combines an academy and college; its doors are open to both sexes, they have equal privileges. This is as it should be. The old custom of educating girls and boys apart is all wrong."²¹

It was the second institution of higher learning in the nation to open its doors to women on an equal basis with men. It became later on a co-educational college and served the middle western area throughout this period. Iowa contributed both funds and students to its support.

The Universalists in all the localities gave their support to community projects that were educational and cultural. No matter who the leaders might be they were eager that the young people have all possible advantages. In some localities they were leaders as well as ardent followers. In Mt. Pleasant, Dr. William Chamberlain gave the books that formed the nucleus for the Ladies Library Association and which in modern times has become the Mount Pleasant City

²⁰Rev. W. R. Cole, Lombard Day (pamphlet).

²¹Erasmus Manford, Twenty-Five Years in the West, Chicago, 1867, p. 346.

library.²²

In July, 1896 Kendall Young bequeathed his entire fortune "to the city of Webster City, Iowa, in trust to have and to hold the same in trust for the establishment and maintenance of a free Public Library, in Webster City, Iowa which shall be free to all the people of Webster City." The "said library and reading room to be located on Seneca Street - upon some parts of lots one, two, three, four, Block numbers twenty-seven."

The amount of his estate in 1896 was \$150,000.²³ The principal was invested by the Trustees largely in Iowa land and estimated in 1943 to be approximately \$500,000.

Two years after receiving the bequest the Kendall Young library was opened to the public with eleven hundred books on the shelves.²⁴ Following the death of Mrs. Jane Young in 1903, a new building was erected and dedicated in September, 1905. By 1915 they housed ten thousand volumes, and an art room had been added and dedicated to the memory of Mrs. Young.²⁵

There has been a conscientious effort to carry out Mr. Young's design when he endowed this library to be an active factor in popular education, for the tenth clause of

²² Grade Roberts, History of the Mount Pleasant Universalist Church Library, (Manuscript).

²³ Charles Aldrich, Kendall Young and the Kendall Young Library, pamphlet, p. 35.

²⁴ Ibid., p. 45.

²⁵ Ibid., pp. 46 & 47.

section five of his will reads, "In the purchase of books and reading matter for such library, it is my wish that such books and reading matter shall be procured as shall be helpful and instructive to the mass of the people."²⁶

He not only gave to the Universalist Church and the library, he also bequeathed a section containing seventy acres of timber land to the city which is now the Kendall Young Park. "The philanthropy and generosity which prompted Mr. Young to make this gift, and the benefits the community will derive therefrom, will cause generations untold, to hold the name of Kendall Young in grateful remembrance."²⁷

R. W. Terrill gave a plot of fifteen acres to the city of Manchester and \$60,000 for its care. His residence in the plot was to be used after his death for an "Old Women's Home".²⁸

Dr. J. P. Reichard gave to Mitchellville the city park which lies on the east side of the village²⁹ and Uncle Tom Mitchell gave the four acre plot in the northeast corner of the Seminary plat for cemetery purposes. Three Universalists were appointed by a town meeting held in the Universalist church to incorporate the Mitchellville Cemetery Association. Since the town was incorporated in 1875 the cemetery

²⁶ Ibid., p. 54.

²⁷ Ibid., p. 62.

²⁸ Annals of Iowa, 1925-27, Vol. 15, p. 555.

²⁹ Conversation with Mrs. Charlotte Mason, Mitchellville, Ia.

has come into its possession.³⁰

Many of the churches were opened to their communities for the use of lecturers and musicians. Most of the lecturers were travelers or reformers. In Storm Lake in 1882 a music convention was held in the church where a concert of sixty voices was presented.³¹ The Cedar Rapids Society had purchased a new pipe organ in November, 1878, and a month later Professor and Mrs. Louis Folk of Chicago used it in giving a concert in the city.³²

The two most frequently mentioned travel lecturers were the Universalist ministers, the Revs. J. P. Sanford and B. F. Snook. In the newspapers of the era there are frequent accounts of the eloquent oratory of these two men. The former became a Chataqua and Lyceum lecturer after leaving the ministry and so lectured on other themes than his European travels.

On Monday evening Col. J. P. Sanford lectured on "Paris and the War". "The people of Waverly were favored with a rare literary treat". Later that week the New Universalist church was dedicated by him, "the distinguished traveler, lecturer and preacher."³³

The following account appeared in the papers after

³⁰ Mitchellville Index, Oct. 6, 1926.

³¹ Storm Lake Pilot, Aug. 31, 1882.

³² Cedar Rapids Standard, Nov. 28 & Dec. 19, 1878.

³³ Waverly Republican, Dec. 22 & Dec. 29, 1870.

Mr. Snook's lectures in Steamboat Rock had just closed.

"The course affords the richest intellectual treat enjoyed by our citizens for years. It is a real blessing to be able to sit for an hour or so and listen to his beautiful descriptive lectures. His ... impressive manner of address is very pleasing and he seems to possess the power of carrying the listener with him, and as one who had viewed the scenes before, was simply acting as guide and instructor. Whether in the gay metropolis of France, in the land of Egypt by its mighty pyramids, traversing burning sands, climbing sacred mountains, exploring ancient ruins, or buried cities, treading ancient mosques, or standing by the holy sepulchre, in all you are with him. The emotions that fill his soul and stir his heart permeates the entire audience and each soul and heart swells back responsive answer."³⁴

It would seem that many Universalists were reformers and lent themselves, mind and hand to serve the causes in which they had faith. In an earlier period Uncle Tom Mitchell had operated an "Underground Railroad" station at his home in Polk County, Iowa.

During this period many advocated Women's Rights. Mrs. Manford, the wife of the famous circuit rider and missionary in the West, was in the field, too, lecturing not on theology but on temperance, the elevation of women and general education. Her husband wrote, "Let women speak as well as man in the lecture-room, and even in the pulpit, let her speak on all subjects of human interest. As she belongs to the human family she is as much interested as man in all intellectual and moral subjects."³⁵

That position on equality for women was one

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Eldora Herald, Oct. 23, 1878.

³⁵

Erasmus Manford, Twenty-five Years in the West, Chicago, 1867, p. 273.

recognized by the whole denomination, so there were women reform leaders as well as men. Also a goodly number of women ministers were in the field in Iowa working for their church, which recognized their abilities and capacities as individuals.

The Rev. Marianna T. Folsom, a graduate of St. Lawrence University in 1860, was for a short time pastor at Marshalltown and gave hundreds of woman suffrage lectures. She and Lucy Stone held meetings in Massachusetts. She lectured on temperance, peace and woman suffrage during the latter part of the nineteenth century.³⁶ Mrs. Nettie Sanford, the wife of ^{the} Rev. J. P. Sanford, had an interest in the newspaper in Marshalltown, and was the author of a "History of Marshall County" in 1867. In May, 1888, she was sent as the local delegate to a suffrage convention.³⁷ In December in 1897, Mrs. Laura M. Johns of Kansas was in Iowa Falls to direct the County Suffrage Convention in the Universalist church.

The members, the ministers and the churches were participants in the campaign. The State Convention repeatedly went on record as supporting it. In Dubuque in 1883 the annual session adopted the following, "That every soul is a unit in God's sight, and equally responsible to God and human law, we express our positive conviction that men should

³⁶ Universalist Leader (Boston), Feb. 20, 1909.

³⁷ Marshalltown Weekly Times Republican, May 22, 1888.

hasten to extend the legal right of suffrage to women, of which they have been so long unjustly deprived."³⁸

The temperance issue found crusaders in every locality in Iowa where there was a Universalist church. In Bloomfield in 1874, Leo Miller, a famous author, lectured in the church on the subject "Woman and Her Relation to the Cause of Temperance."³⁹ The Reverend Florence Kollock addressed the Reform Club in Waverly on Temperance, and was herself a member and the treasurer of the Blue Ribbon Club. When she was leaving the city they wrote that they recognized

"that her residence in our midst has been one of general usefulness and Christian kindness toward humanity; and it being the universal verdict that her presence was calculated to scatter sunshine and happiness about the social circle; that in her noble work for the cause of temperance in our town and county she has been the means of lifting up many unfortunate victims of rum to sobriety and usefulness."⁴⁰

About the same time the Rev. W. W. King, a most talented speaker, lectured in the Universalist church in Eldora on November 16th, 17th and 18th on temperance reform. His themes were: "The Hour of Peril", "The Price of Dishonor", and "The Way of Deliverance".⁴¹

In Storm Lake, while the society was still known as the Liberal Christian Church their pastor, the Rev. B. F. Snook, (a Universalist minister) addressed a union meeting in the Baptist church. All of the permanent and temporary seats

³⁸ Dubuque Daily Herald, Sept. 21, 1883.

³⁹ Davis County Republican, (Bloomfield) Dec. 17, 1874.

⁴⁰ Waverly Republican, Aug. 1, 1878.

⁴¹ Eldora Herald, Nov. 10, 1875.

were filled and the standing room was occupied. "Mr. Snook dealt with the subject of intemperance in its religious, moral and financial aspects. The lecture was one of the most logical and sensible to which we have ever listened. There was no cant and bombast about it, as is so often the case with temperance lectures. He contended that the only way to bring about true temperance reform was to educate the masses."⁴² Universalists there were hosts in 1882 to another Union Temperance meeting where Mr. Thomas and Senator Robinson were speaking for the amendment. [Mr. Robinson was a Universalist]⁴³ Mary A. Livermore [a Universalist], and Frances Willard were speakers in many points in Iowa, including Marshalltown in December, 1879.⁴⁴ Somewhat later an oratorical contest sponsored by the W.C.T.U. was also held in the Universalist church there.⁴⁵

Mrs. L. G. Johnson addressed an audience on prohibition in the Court House in West Union on Saturday and in the Universalist church on Monday in the fall of 1893.⁴⁶ They were advocating not just temperance but legal prohibition. Frank Camp stated that the Universalists were such belligerent and tenacious reformers that he was confident that they thereby antagonized others and so restricted and

⁴² Storm Lake Pilot, Dec. 22, 1875.

⁴³ Ibid., June 22, 1882.

⁴⁴ Marshalltown Weekly-Republican, Dec. 10, 1879.

⁴⁵ Iowa Times Republican (Marshalltown), April 3, 1896.

⁴⁶ The Argo (West Union), Oct. 17, 1893.

isolated their membership. With due respect to a fine gentleman and a keen observer, one may say that perhaps he failed to realize that they would not have been true to their religious convictions if they had not crusaded for temperance.

The State Convention set forth their collective position in 1883 at Dubuque as; "That we will cordially cooperate with all earnest people in the great moral reforms ... of our times, and especially in the great and holy cause of temperance."⁴⁷

The Rev. J. L. Everton of Osage, in speaking in his own church on temperance, reflects the typical Universalist attack upon the evil. Their theology is reflected in their reforming work. He said, "The great thought that must be taught in this world is that man and man alone has the making of his own heaven or his own hell, that man has the right to enjoy, if he will, the blessings and privileges of God today, or of cursing himself and leading himself into the most terrible miseries known to the human family." - He urged as had the Rev. B. F. Snook that they educate the young people to the great curse of intemperance.

The Rev. Mr. Lewellen of West Union protested in the 1890's against the lack of Congressional leadership in general and stated his conception of the function of the liberal Christian ministry. His theme was "A National Force and Disgrace - Congress".

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Dubuque Daily Herald, Sept. 21, 1883.

"I do not concede that the duty of the progressive preacher ends when he has talked to people about their souls and the hereafter; there are other questions that demand their attention. I have no use for any religion or doctrine that concerns itself only in getting me out of this world. The religion that Christ taught had to do with this world and in speaking of the Kingdom of Heaven he said it was something we have with us on earth. The greater part of his teaching was in the line of showing people how to live here."

He went on to point out how ministers in the past had led in denouncing such evils as slavery, and problems of capital and labor.

"What we need is an honest set of legislators. Congressmen are merely peoples' delegates..... Congress was called into session to relieve the people.... [They have been] Wrangling and filibustering for nearly three months....Let us be manly enough to vote against men who betray them. I don't care what a man's politics may be so long as he is honest and earnest and for the good of the people."⁴⁸

Although Universalist laymen and ministers were among the first to come to Iowa, they had not won recognition, respect or tolerance from the so-called orthodox Christians by 1870. The religious debates continued until the eighties, and much sparring may be noted from the pulpits and newspaper columns; and continually the liberal communicants met discrimination.

The editor of the Eldora Herald quoted the Rev. Mr. Gowdy as saying in a sermon in 1874, "We believe that God is a God of justice and that he will reward his creatures according to their works....We implore you to do good because it brings happiness in this world and greater glory in the

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The Argo (West Union), Nov. 8, 1893.

one to come; because the goodness of God to man merits our love, our adoration, our service, our praise, our truest worship." Then the editor, a rather tolerant man, remarked, "While we do not accept his doctrine, we must say that Mr. Gowdy deals fairly and ably with his subjects, paying the utmost respect to the opinions of others."⁴⁹ During that month in the winter of 1874, there must have been considerable controversy in Eldora because in March a news item recounts that Rev. Mr. Blakely has been retained until the next meeting of the Presbytery, "although there has been some feeling on account of the reverend gentleman's bigotry with regard to the Universalists." This would seem to indicate a growing sense of tolerance on behalf of the laymen.⁵⁰

In 1876 Mr. W. L. Vestal, editor of the Storm Lake Pilot, and a member of the Liberal Christian Society, held a controversy in his paper with the Rev. Henry Brown, a Methodist from Alta. They discussed The Divinity of Christ, The Atonement, The Existence of Hell and Heaven, Total Depravity, Eternal Damnation and The Bible as God's Revelation. The presentation covered about two thirds of the front page and reached a large number of people, many of whom showed their interest by writing to the editor. One of these correspondents wrote, "I congratulate you on the stand you have taken for the cause of truth in opposition to the erroneous teachings of some of our orthodox ministers." Another wrote,

⁴⁹Eldora Herald, Feb. 24, 1874.

⁵⁰Ibid., Mar. 10, 1874.

"If those doctrines are true a candid discussion based on reason will not harm them." Mr. Vestal had maintained that all Methodists did not in their hearts believe the creed they professed. Mr. Brown's reply was typical of his period and group.

"But permit me to say that a man who will call in question the virtue of the Mother of our Lord; impeach the credibility of the Evangelists, accuse Peter of selling the Lord, and finally reject the Bible as a reliable revelation from God, is not a fit person to accuse Methodist ministers of duplicity. such accusations coming from one who entertains such sentiments are regarded by us as complimentary."⁵¹

The Rev. Dr. Rhea, a Methodist minister in Iowa Falls, published in the local paper an article on "What is Universalism and what are the arguments by which it is defended?" Excerpts therefrom were: "Universalism is a system of Bible Interpretation which proposes to remove all danger of the soul of man of being finally lost in sin and suffering. The main argument offered is that the mercy and justice of God will no allow any soul to be finally and hopelessly lost." He wrote that Jesus was sacrificed in vain if all men are to be saved, that God was cruel to appoint man to so much sin and suffering if he was going to Heaven anyway. "Many of its followers [Universalists] are exemplary, Godly men, at the same time ... it tends to lower the standard of piety weakens man's sense of responsibility [It] has not been noted for reforming men. [It] does not grow rapidly anywhere", that there was no responsibility for one to do what

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Storm Lake Pilot, Feb. 16, 1876.

God would do anyway.⁵²

The Rev. B. F. Snook was the Universalist pastor and notice was given that he would reply to Mr. Rhea's discourse, but the next issue of the newspaper did not carry the response, but the editor's interpretation thereof, and stated that Mr. Snook never tried to disprove one of the main points of his opponent.⁵³ Considering his varied and distinguished career as a minister and lecturer it would seem that this was a somewhat biased account.

Mrs. Ella Burleson of Webster City can recall many times her church was the object of discrimination. Orthodox ministers mentioned it from the pulpit and informed the Almighty what they thought ought to be done with the Universalist church.

"At one time a union service was being arranged by the local pastors and the Universalists were invited to join with the others, when the Baptist pastor, Rev. Bloogood, especially severe in his denunciation, upset the plans by declaring flatly that if the other ministers were going to have softening of the heart he was not and consequently, the Universalists did not receive an invitation that year.

"At one time a certain young doctor died in Dubuque; his remains were sent here and the funeral services were to be held at the home of his sister, who was a member of the Congregational church. The doctor had been a Universalist, so his sister asked that pastor to officiate and invited her own pastor to assist. This he firmly declined to do, saying he would not serve in that capacity with a Universalist!

"The Methodists were not far behind with the cold shoulder in those years, and Mrs. Burleson recalled that at one time a reformed saloonkeeper coming to the city

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Iowa Falls Sentinel, Jan. 24, 1894.

⁵³

Ibid., Feb. 7, 1894.

as a pastor of the Methodist church issued his denunciation from the pulpit in the words that he 'had come to the town to wipe out all saloonkeepers and Universalists.'

"When revivals were in full blast, some evangelists tried to stir up feeling against the Universalists until some of the latter membership had cause to feel that the revivalists were inspired by, and were creating something other than religious zeal."⁵⁴

The orthodox people of Webster City in the latter part of the century

"could not imagine a real religion that left out the hell-fire and brimstone, and preached a gospel of love and forgiveness. Not all the pastors and evangelists of Orthodox churches in this city, however, were of the same mind, and at one time a series of union revival meetings were planned, in which the evangelist found after his arrival upon the scene that all but the Universalists were to be invited to participate. To the surprise of the orthodox ones he refused to have anything to do with the idea unless the more liberal body were invited to participate. Therefore, they were invited, and they did participate in the meetings."⁵⁵

"Herbert Quick, the great Iowa novelist in his wonderful story, 'The Hawkeye', speaks of the early day Universalist pastor taking for his example [and using his name] Rev. [Mr.] Snook, Mrs. Burleson's father, who was the founder and pastor of the Universalist church of Steamboat Rock. In the novel he calls it a Unitarian church. Mr. Quick's words are, that it was a thing of shame not unmingled with danger, to have much to do with the Universalists in that day. The intolerance of the time is shown in the epithet 'The fire insurance office' which was frequently given to the church in which the doctrine of love was preached."⁵⁶

Mrs. Ward M. Allen writes "My grandmother was a very ardent Universalist and I well remember her talking a great deal about religion. There seemed to be quite a bit of verbal controversy between our denomination and the Meth-

⁵⁴ Webster City Daily News, June 16, 1924.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

odists of Castalia. My grandmother took issue with their 'hell-fire' doctrine and they in turn looked down upon the Universalists as little better than heathen."⁵⁷

Mr. Frank E. Foster recounts an occurrence in the latter part of the century in Iowa Falls that was frequently repeated elsewhere. A County Sunday School Convention was held and there was a parade of children from the Protestant churches. "Those in charge refused to let the Universalist children march in the parade. Shades of Salem!"⁵⁸

In 1895 the Universalist Young Peoples Christian Union was a member of the Mount Pleasant City Union. At one session when the Universalist representative was absent, they were disfellowshipped. The Presbyterian young people sent a delegation to tell the Y.P.C.U. that they were not in sympathy with the action.⁵⁹ These discriminations against young people and children were the hardest for the adults to accept.

Miss Louise Hering tells how she and her sister Carrie were refused letters of transfer from the Congregational church in Charles City when they wished to join the Universalist Society there.⁶⁰

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Mrs. Ward M. Allen, Ossian, Iowa to Elva Tucker, Cedar Falls, Iowa, May 16, 1943.

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Frank E. Foster, Iowa Falls, Iowa, to Elva Tucker, Cedar Falls, Iowa, April 22, 1943.

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First Universalist Church, Mt. Pleasant, Iowa, Y.P.C.U. Secretary's Record, (no page numbers).

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Interview with Miss Louise Hering, a resident of Charles City, Iowa.

The editor of the Manchester Press wrote in 1943 that

"It was considered scandalous by the Methodists, Baptists and even by the early Presbyterians and Congregationalists, that a religious organization should deny the existence of a literal hell, in the face of plain scriptural injunction, precept and example. The preaching of hell fire was an especial prerogative of the Methodists, with the Baptists not far behind in thundering denunciations upon the sinner and assuring him of an everlasting plunge into the seething satanic flames. The Universalists, however, stuck to their guns and consumed carloads of paper and mountains of sermons in defense of their belief."⁶¹

Occasionally, men of other religious denominations were tolerant and as time passed they gradually became more broad minded; which was much appreciated by the liberals in Iowa. Such notices as the following reveal more tolerance than many other items published in the eighties. The Universalist group in Marshalltown had purchased the Episcopalian church after the mortgage had been foreclosed. The Episcopalian Bishop Perry had been in the city to see what could be accomplished in the interest of the local parish. The editor wrote, "We heartily with our Episcopal brethren might save their beautiful building and perpetuate their church organization.... we have not a word to say against our Universalist brethren. If they think they are on the right track, we bid them God-speed in every effort to make men better."⁶²

Most of the intolerance was expressed toward Universalists as a group for their religious beliefs and not as individuals. Frequently they are spoken of as "exemplary

⁶¹ The Manchester Press, April 8, 1943.

⁶² Marshalltown Weekly Republican, Feb. 25, 1880.

Godly men" Frank Camp spoke of several individual members as fine persons, of good family, well respected by the community.⁶³ In Bloomfield in the winter of 1875 there had been some rowdyism at a Universalist mask festival. The local newspaper printed some of the controversy and then remarked that "The fact that some of the best people in this town or county belonged to that church is admitted and we say again that no fair-minded man would think of casting any reproach upon them."⁶⁴ At the same time in Storm Lake, the Rev. J. W. Hanson wrote, "A number of the most prominent and excellent people are of our faith."⁶⁵ Mrs. Ella Burleson when speaking of the Webster City church in the nineteenth century said "People, who were prominent and influential in the business, financial and social life of the town were members."⁶⁶ In every parish the membership was largely from the professional classes such as doctors, lawyers and teachers and the prosperous middle class of business and farming. Most of those who migrated to this state during this period^{and} who were Universalists, came from the eastern seaboard states, and the majority of the names of the members were of British extraction.

The Universalists felt keenly the intolerance of the other denominations. A daughter of one of the members in West Union said the consistent religious and social discrimi-

⁶³ Interview with Frank Camp, West Union, Iowa.

⁶⁴ Davis County Republican (Bloomfield), Dec. 23, 1875.

⁶⁵ Storm Lake Pilot, Nov. 24, 1875.

⁶⁶ Webster City Daily News, June 16, 1924.

nation against them disheartened the less valiant members and limited their membership to those who could and would face it because of their convictions. Louise Hering of Charles City revealed a similar situation there. This was doubtless true in many communities throughout Iowa. Only the fellowship of kindred minds and souls and the solace and inspiration of their church was compensation for the subtle ostracism and persecution.

However, suffering from intolerance they did not themselves become intolerant toward other churches. The Mitchellville church housed the congregations of all the other denominations until they had built meeting houses of their own. Mrs. Louis Tucker, (my grandmother) an English Methodist minister's daughter, first heard a Universalist sermon when acting as organist for the Methodists in the Universalist church where she was invited to assist in the Universalist services in that capacity. She and her husband became interested and later joined the liberal sect.⁶⁷

At Eldora in 1873 Warren Chase discoursed on Spiritualism in the Universalist church,⁶⁸ which was open to anyone who wished to express honest convictions. In Marshalltown the church was used by that same group, which appears to have been quite unpopular. The building at New Sharon was erected because their minister had been refused the pulpit of one of the orthodox churches. The platform on which they

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Interview with her son, Herbert Tucker.

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Eldora Herald, Dec. 16, 1873.

erected the church "was that it should be forever equally free to all denomination."⁶⁹ So this sect that sought truth, for itself, granted to all men, the privilege of seeking truth however, wherever, or whenever they conscientiously desired to search. Their churches were open to all sincere believers or truth seekers, whether or not they agreed with Universalist theology.

Not all communities were equally intolerant. As early as 1873 union services were held in the Eldora church.⁷⁰ About twenty years later the editor of the Eldora Herald was very irate over the narrow attitude of one of the orthodox ministers, a Rev. Mr. Pye, whom he designated as "not only an intolerant bigot but a stirrer-up of strife," because he preached a vigorous sermon protesting an article about the Rev. B. F. Snook which was a reprint from the "Warsaw Wisconsin Exchange". He went on to point out that he was "the only minister in town who is everlastingly pounding the people of another denomination." The article under fire read as follows,

"At the M. E. Church last Sunday evening [the] Rev. B. F. Snook, of the Universalist church of this city preached to a large and deeply interested audience in response to an invitation tendered him by the pastor, [the] Rev. Enoch Perry. This is an event worthy of notice as it is the first time such a courtesy has been extended to a Universalist clergyman in our city. It is a new departure in an intelligent direction, indicating a healthy moral tendency to elevate true worship and Christian character above creed in the scale

⁶⁹ History of Mahaska County, Iowa, Des Moines, 1878, p. 512.

⁷⁰ Eldora Herald, Oct. 10, 1873.

of fellowship. Rev. [Mr.] Snook's sermon was on 'The Conflicts of Life', was ably presented, full of practical common sense and abounding in charity and good will to all, a feature for which his discourses are justly famous and popular Increase such religion and men will cease to be infidels."⁷¹

It would seem that in both Iowa Falls and in Warsaw some of the people were becoming more broad minded and tolerant of those with differing religious faiths. It was a forecast of the twentieth century trend.

Every parish had its leaders, many of whom were outstanding men in their communities and some of whom were leaders in the affairs of the state. About many of them very little record has been made except a brief account of a few of their activities. A host of them were devout, courageous, earnest, hard working, God-fearing men and women who will remain unsung to the end of time. Many of the outstanding ones have been mentioned in the stories of their own parishes. Some like S. J. Oldfield, C. L. Henney, A. T. Weatherwax, Nathan P eckham, Seymour Goodspeed, Pascal Whitney, A. P. Fogg, James Toy, Dr. Timothy Masoh, J. A. Dean, Dr. Heald, Jacob Loy and Luke Roberts were pillars of strenght in their own churches and highly respected citizens in their own communities. Kendall Young and Thomas Mitchell gave generously to their community as well as to their parish. G. S. Robinson, R. W. Tirrill and Hon. J. H. Funk were prominent lawyers serving in the Iowa senate. These individuals, chosen from many to give a glimpse of the type of

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Iowa Falls Sentinel, Sept. 23, 1896.

leaders in this liberal group were representative of many left unnamed.

Jacob Loy was born in Ohio and moved finally to Clarinda, Iowa where he and Phoebe Tillman reared seven children. "He is plain of speech and manner, firm in his convictions and is not afraid to express his opinions. His thirty-five years residence here have won him hundreds of warm friends."⁷²

Judson R. Crary came to Boone in 1867. He taught school, was an accountant and hardware merchant. He "was a man whom to know was to respect and honor."⁷³

Charles Tucker was a Civil War veteran, who served at Gettysburg and with Sherman at Chattanooga and on the famous March to the Sea. He taught school for many years after going to Boone from New York. He was always courteous and obliging; honorable and straightforward.⁷⁴ James Harker was one of charter members of the Liberal Christian Society and later of the Universalist Church of Storm Lake. "Our friend who has gone was a strong man. He was firm in his convictions and always spoke positively. He was a man upon whom younger men could lean." He

"was a pure minded man. ... over a period of nine years, we never heard him speak an indecent word or utter a profane oath. He never indulged in idle gossip. ... He was a total abstainer from strong

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Biographical History of Page County, Iowa, Chicago 1890, p. 555.

⁷³ History of Boone County, Iowa, Chicago, 1914, Vol. II, p. 40.

⁷⁴ Ibid., Vol. II, p. 575.

drink. ... Surely his was an exemplary life. ... Toward all forms of man's beliefs he had patience and charity. ... For himself, he was satisfied with the mild and benignant theories of the Universalist faith and was therefore a member in good standing of that church at the time of his death. Largely tolerant of the opinions of others he often said during his sickness, 'When I am dead invite all the preachers to my funeral'.⁷⁵

"Ira Burbank was born in Bethel, Vermont, May 2, 1804. Silenda Billings was born in Hartford, Vermont, March 6, 1807. They were married at Bethel, March 6, 1833. After a fifty year residence at Bethel, during which time Mr. Burbank was one of her most active citizens, they emigrated to Iowa in 1855 arriving in West Union, June 3. In the fall of the same year they purchased a farm in Richland (now Bethel) township and moved there. In the following year there was a large emigration to Iowa and still further westward, and so many calls were made upon their hospitality that they finally established the 'Vermont House' a sort of half-way hostelry between West Union and the next village many miles west. Here they prospered abundantly, Mr. Burbank was postmaster at Bethel until his return to town in the fall of 1866. Here the aged couple lived in happiness and contentment until Mr. Burbank's death in 1877. His companion survived him six years, dying in the fall of 1883. Both believed in the Universal salvation of mankind."

It was they who bequeathed the money for the Universalist church building which was erected in West Union in 1888 and in whose memory it was dedicated.⁷⁶

R. W. Tirrill, born in New York, moved to Manchester in 1856. He was the County Superintendent of schools for four years and on the school board for twenty-one years. He and his wife attended the University of Iowa and were the oldest students attending in 1893. She studied English literature, French and German. He studied law and was

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Storm Lake Pilot, July 12, 1883.

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The Argo (West Union), Dec. 19, 1888.

admitted to the bar in 1894.⁷⁷

When Pascal Whitney passed away the church at Osage passed this resolution honoring one of their charter members.

"That the church, in the death of Pascal Whitney, has lost one of its purest and most honored members; that society has lost an example which the world would do well to copy; that our citizens have parted with a friend whose lips spoke no guile; and that his family has parted with a benefactor, whose character was unsullied, and whose memory is fragrant and whose loss is inestimable."⁷⁸

The Waterloo Society resolved, "That in the death of Bro. Weatherwax our church and Society have parted with a valuable officer and member, a most exemplary citizen, and an ardent, honest and sincere friend."⁷⁹

Much was written of M. L. Edwards and Dr. Chamberlain and their work in Mount Pleasant in an earlier chapter. Another splendid type of Universalist was Father Schreiner, who was born in Bavaria, enlisted in the Polish army because he wished to serve the cause of liberty. He came to America in 1833 and lived until the close of the century in Mount Pleasant. The church secretary wrote,

"that in the death of Bro. Schreiner, this church has lost a member whose devotion to our faith is a precious memory of steadfastness, loyalty and zeal, and while his face shall be seen among us no more, the church is yet blessed with the influence of his high character, his independent honest manhood, and with the example of a good life well spent, and preserved by the eternal beneficence to a ripened old age."⁸⁰

⁷⁷ History of Delaware County, Iowa, Chicago, 1914, Vol. 2, p. 61.

⁷⁸ First Universalist Church of Osage, Iowa, Secretary's Record, Vol. 1, p. 33.

⁷⁹ Universalist Church & Society of Waterloo, Iowa, Secretary's Record, Vol. 1, p. 76.

⁸⁰ First Universalist Church of Mount Pleasant, Iowa, Secretary's Record, Vol. 2, p. 59.

And of George Throop they said "His long and faithful services in the cause of a rational and liberal religion, his earnest, gentle and honest life, exemplifying in daily conduct his faith in deed as the fitting expression of his creed."⁸¹

"Thomas Mitchell was born in Claremont, New Hampshire, March 3, 1816, and was therefore over seventy eight years of age at the time of his death He came west in search of a permanent home in 1839, and first located in St. Charles County, Missouri, but remained there only until the following March, when he removed to Fairfield, Iowa, where he remained until the early spring of 1844, when he came to Polk County, arriving April 14, 1844. That was more than a year before the land now embraced within Polk County was offered for settlement, in accordance with the later treaty stipulations with the Sac and Fox Indians."⁸²

"He obtained a permit from Captain Allen commanding officer of Fort Des Moines, to make a land claim and cultivate it, provided he would build a bridge over the creek, an important thing, as it was on the direct trail from Keokuk and Iowa City to Fort Des Moines and in the spring and fall the stream was impassible."⁸³

"The new home was established in a log cabin, erected by 'Uncle Tom' himself, near the later Mitchellville [which he platted] and was called Apple Grove, in recognition of the numerous wild apple trees growing in that vicinity. The family consisted of the husband, wife and two children and an adopted daughter, and for three months after arriving there Mrs. Mitchell did not see the face of another white woman. The base of supplies was then at Fairfield, one hundred miles away, and Mr. Mitchell was frequently compelled to be on the road for supplies, leaving Mrs. Mitchell and the children at home with no other neighbors than the Indians; but Uncle Tom was friendly with the Indians as with other people, and his family was never disturbed by them, though of course the latter were held somewhat in subjection by the U. S. troops at Fort Des Moines, some twelve miles distant.

⁸¹Ibid., Vol. 2, p. 95.

⁸²Clipping from the Des Moines Register, 1894.

⁸³History of Polk County, Iowa, Des Moines, 1908, pp.5-15.

"The greater trail from the East to the always still greater West passed by the Mitchell home at Apple Grove, the nearest settlement eastward being at Bear Grove, near the present site of Marengo. All travelers found unbounded hospitality in the home of 'Uncle Tom' Mitchell and the result was that his double log cabin soon became 'Mitchell Tavern' and still later became famous from the Mississippi River to the Pacific Ocean as a place where the weary could rest and the hungry be well fed. During the rush to California in 1849, 'Uncle Tom' fed over seven thousand teams and was compelled to haul a considerable portion of the feed from Fairfield, the few farmers in this region at that time not being able to raise a sufficient surplus to supply the new settlers. Many of the first settlers of Des Moines ate their first meal in Polk County in 'Uncle Tom's' cabin home and never have been more graciously treated anywhere."

A. C. Bondurant, the founder of the town of Bondurant, said,

"When he came to Polk County he had neither money nor credit. He could neither borrow money nor buy the necessities with which to farm; Mr. Mitchell, trusted him. He loaned him two hundred and fifty dollars.... It is scarcely to be wondered at that they were warm friends during all the days of their acquaintance."⁸⁴

"'In the early days' said Billy Moore 'when a snow storm came we young folks, Hoyt Sherman, Mr. Tid....Mr. Casady and a lot more of us would hustle out, get out a wood sled - sleighs were not in fashion - and picking up a fiddler, would start in [the] early evening for Uncle Tommy Mitchell's.... We never sent any notice, but, getting there at seven o'clock or so would soon have possession of the house. Mr. and Mrs. Mitchell would join the rest of us in a good old-fashioned dance and at midnight would serve us a supper that it makes my mouth water now to think of'"⁸⁵

"Welcoming so many people to new homes in the country and gaining a personal interest in them 'Uncle Tom' has always been a leading man in the county and taken an active interest in the school, courts, political and social affairs. He was elected the first

⁸⁴Des Moines Register, Clipping, 1894.

⁸⁵Newspaper clipping, source unknown, found among the Mitchellville Church Records.

sheriff in the county in April 1846. There were one hundred seventy-five votes cast at that election which is an indication of the population of the county two years after 'Uncle Tom' had located his home at Apple Grove. [His home was the first polling place.] He represented Polk and Jasper Counties in the first session of the legislature held in Des Moines and was elected senator from this county in 1873."⁸⁶ "He laid out the town of Mitchellville in 1867 and became a resident thereof, founded and built a seminary, which for many years was a flourishing school, [until]overshadowed by the [public] schools in Des Moines. [It] was sold to the state and transformed into the present Industrial School for girls. He also helped to organize the Universalist Church and erected a meeting house."⁸⁷ "He filled numerous official positions and places of trust and was faithful in all of them as he was in all the affairs of life."⁸⁸

"Thomas Mitchell may be justly recorded as the god-father of Polk County. His generous, humanitarian heart embracing all men and all things. His very face was a smile. Everybody called him 'Uncle Tommy' or 'Uncle Tom.'"⁸⁹ "He has left his impression upon the history [of Polk County] more generally than any other man, and no other resident has ever been so generally loved and respected. His home has been at the service of the public for nearly all of the over fifty years that he had a home in the county. The poor black man found a resting place there, and food and supplies for the onward journey, in the days when those of darker skins followed the North Star in their journey toward freedom across Iowa. He lived and looked on the moral side of every public question, and labored energetically for the best possible government with an energy that never compromised with a wrong. Always energetic and outspoken, and with a frankness that won confidence, he was always anxious to aid the unfortunate, and strengthen the helpless, and aid in every good work that would make life better and happier for all. He lived the good man's life and has entered into the good man's reward."⁹⁰

⁸⁶Clipping from Des Moines Register, 1894.

⁸⁷History of Polk County, Iowa, op. cit.

⁸⁸Clipping, Des Moines Register, 1894.

⁸⁹History of Polk County, Iowa, op. cit.

⁹⁰Clipping, Des Moines Register, 1894.

"Politically, he was a Whig and an Abolitionist from birth. Religiously, he was a devoted Universalist, but his humanitarian spirit embraced all creeds. He loved a Methodist or Presbyterian as fervently as a Universalist. He gave largely and cheerfully to all denominations for, like Abou Ben Adhem, he loved his fellowman.

"Socially his whole life was a benefaction to the county and the state. He made everybody about him...happier and better. The darkest night, the most tempestuous storm, the most piercing cold, could not prevent him from serving his friends, and they were numberless, for he touched human life in Polk County in all its phases. For half a century his counsel was sought by leading men in the state in matters of public import, so widely known was his probity and honor. He was once wealthy, but he built and equipped school houses, employed teachers, built churches, gave to good objects large sums, in fact his whole life was a charity to do good. Through an unfortunate investment, he lost heavily, and died poor in worldly effects, but the richest man whose name is on the death roll of the county or state...rich in true riches, an unsullied name and possessing the reverence and affection of the people with whom he lived."⁹¹

Judge Wright said, "Tom Mitchell was an exemplification of the fact that nothing is so good as goodness itself. Tom Mitchell was goodness." In all the years that the judge knew him he had never heard him utter an oath or an unclean word. He was a total abstainer from liquor and tobacco and when Mitchellville was platted out it was made a condition of every deed that no intoxicating liquors should be sold on the premises.

The church inscribed this memorial

"He was the actual founder and life-long friend and supporter of this church. Its faith was the main-spring of his noble life. We as individuals have been particularly blessed by the sunshine of his genial personality. We have been guided by his

⁹¹History of Polk County, Iowa, op. cit.

mature judgement. We have been enriched by his magnanimous spirit. He daily incarnated the Golden Rule. In prosperity he was not elated; in adversity he was not cast down; in both he trusted in Divine Providence and loved his fellowmen. Invariably returning good for evil, he was friend and helper of every worthy cause. Choosing his home in these broad prairies while yet the Indian claimed them as his own, Brother Mitchell welcomed each pioneer upon his arrival, while he retained the confidence and friendship of the Indian tribes. A great state owned him as a benefactor. Thousands claimed him as friend and brother. His life is abundantly written in the history of Iowa."⁹²

[C. L. Henney, Clerk.]

Kendall Young, who bequeathed both the library and a park to the city of Webster City was another of God's noblemen on the frontier. Few who knew him as

"the quiet and equable President of the First National Bank....would suppose that he had ever led the rough life of a sailor 'on the desolate, briny sea,' of a soldier in the service of his country, of a miner in the early days of California, or of a pioneer in the settlement of Northwestern Iowa; but he bore an active part in these capacities, notwithstanding the very different life he has lived in Hamilton County, for almost a generation. His varied career illustrates the character of the best class of Yankee boys who start out in youth to make their way in life and win a competence. His only capital was a cool and clear brain, excellent health, courtesy and kindness toward all, patience to bide his time, and determination and perseverance which never flagged."⁹³

He was born in Eden, Maine, reared on a farm, attended a rural school until he was sixteen; he saw two months service in "The Aroostook War" under Capt. Nash of the Maine militia, for which he received a land warrant for 120 acres, which he chose in Hamilton County four miles from Webster City and named appropriately, "The Aroostook

⁹²Taken from a clipping pasted in the Secretarial Record Book of the Universalist Church of Mitchellville, Iowa.

⁹³Charles Aldrich, Kendall Young and the Kendall Young Library, pamphlet, p. 15.

Farm. ⁹⁴

He sailed before the mast to the West Indies, England and the east coast of the United States. He engaged for a short interval in merchandising with fishermen, then came to Wisconsin in 1847. In two years the gold rush came and he drove an ox team across the plains, making the trip in seven months. He washed for gold at Mormon Island in the American River for two and one half years. His moderate success laid the foundation for his modest fortune. He returned to Wisconsin but moved to Rockton, Illinois; Albion and Irvington, Iowa before permanently locating in Webster City in 1859. He first engaged in merchandising.⁹⁵ His friends have heard him tell this story of his experiences during a panic; "Frequently he would go to his store in the morning, build a fire, sweep out, remain until noon, and then lock up and go to dinner, without having served a single customer or had one enter the store."⁹⁶ Later he had his share of business and prospered.

At the time of the Spirit Lake Massacre in 1857 while he was living at Irvington, many of the settlers fled. "Mr. Young and his associates sawed four inch planks and made a fort with bastions at the corners, settling the plank in the ground upon end." The women were sent away and the men took turns doing sentinel duty until the danger had passed.⁹⁷

⁹⁴Ibid., p. 15.

⁹⁵Ibid., pp. 18-20.

⁹⁶Ibid., p. 30.

⁹⁷Ibid., p. 30.

"Mr. Young was not of an excitable nature. He was cool and deliberate at all times and under all circumstances. His opinions were slowly formed, but once formed he was slow to abandon them. He was open and direct in all his dealings, and despised trickery and duplicity."⁹⁸

"It was his character as a man however that most commends him to us. In the purity of his life, his quiet independence, his freedom from all sham and pretense, his clear, good judgement, his genuine manliness, his kindly nature, his practical common sense, his self-control, his rectitude in all the relations of life...he presented a striking example of a strong and sturdy New England character, as developed by his active life in the West which to an unusual degree commanded the confidence and respect of his fellowmen....

"He was an active member of the Universalist Church, and in his daily life he exemplified the essential elements of a Christian character."⁹⁹

At his funeral in 1896 his pastor, Dr. Amos Crum, spoke the following eulogy.

"Kendall Young was the gift of New England to our western life. His morals were the morals of New England. His industry was the industry of New England character. His prudence was born of the thoughtfulness, the self control, the patience and the faith of New England. His career extended over a period of seventy-six years with the experience that came in a long career. Under these western skies he, of course, broadened his views and enriched his character; but his inheritances were of the eastern coasts. Some of his memories and journeyings were of the sea but whether on land or sea, he was guided by those beacon lights of character which shine through the moral nature. His untarnished name, his record with no blot of evil upon it, is proof that in him wisdom and prudence were combined. He was temperate in all things. He exacted of himself and of others that discipline which earns success. His circumstances, his worldly means increased, but his friendship, his tastes, his modesty, remained unchanged.

"In religion it was his to love the broader view, the more kindly hope. For this he did much. He was

⁹⁸Ibid., p. 32.

⁹⁹Ibid., p. 33.

for years foremost in that group of liberal, far-sighted men who founded and sustained the church which represents his convictions and his hopes. His memory will be cherished there while memory remains to those who knew him."¹⁰⁰

Dr. William Chamberlain of Burlington and Mt. Pleasant, whose life story was told in chapter two, was a man somewhat like "Uncle Tom" Mitchell and Kendall Young in that they were generous humanitarians. Nearly every locality had a saintly patriarch in pioneer days beloved and respected by all. Many of these were Universalists living their creed of man's brotherhood. Whether they were humanitarians because of their religious convictions or in spite of them or Universalists because of their human sympathies, they were notable men and because of them their faith and their church came to win an often grudging recognition. Most orthodox people believed that Universalism encouraged sin because it taught the final salvation of all men (overlooking the just retribution for sin) but such Godly lives inspired respect for the members if not for the creed.

The ministers who served Iowa from 1870 to 1900 were as varied as the men found in any other walk of life. Seldom, however, was there even a hint that, despite their varying personalities, they lacked devotion to the liberal creed. Some were doubtless average, others above the average in ability, because to be a liberal in those days was a challenge to moral courage and intellectual integrity and sagacity.

¹⁰⁰Ibid., pp. 34-35.

Their followers would not tolerate anything but the best and criticism by orthodox adversaries would tend to eliminate the incompetents. A prerequisite of liberalism is a breadth and depth of culture and outlook that is not necessary to those who merely preach a doctrine accepted on authority. Herbert Quick spoke of the Rev. B. F. Snook, once pastor at Steamboat Rock, as a typical Universalist pastor of his day, saying that he "represented a higher plane of culture than was often encountered in the early life of this state."¹⁰¹

About many of them little is known to help toward a clear picture of them as individuals. There was Prof. John Clarence Lee, a cultured, genial college professor; the Rev. John Edward Keyes, a dynamic preacher and talented singer; kindly, poetical Father Gowdy; three gifted, beloved and devoted women ministers, Fidelia Gillette, Mary Garard, and Augusta J. Chapin; the zealous Jasper Everton, the diligent Isa A. Eberhart, the valiant L. F. Porter who struggled always against ill health; the active challenging Florence Kollock; the pioneering W. W. Merritt and Father Ballinger and the faithful W. A. Pratt. Perhaps the two best known throughout the state because of their missionary activity on behalf of the Iowa State Convention were the universally admired and respected B. F. Snook and Amos Crum. Perhaps a few brief glimpses into the lives of a few of these would illustrate the type of clerical leadership the church had in this middle period.

¹⁰¹Webster City Daily News, June 16, 1924.

When Rev. L. F. Porter presented his resignation the Waterloo parish resolved,

"that it is with grateful hearts we acknowledge how much we are indebted to Brother and Sister Porter for the pretty church in which we worship, for the many who have been won to our faith and fellowship by their faithful and earnest preaching.

"Resolved that we would bear willing testimony to the good they have done to our cause in the State at large by the salutary and helpful influence of their Christian teaching and example, also that by the same they have so generally won the respect and esteem of our citizens, and in a large measure removed much of the popular prejudice against our denomination."¹⁰²

"Rev. [J.C.] Lee is greatly loved and esteemed by the people of this church [Mount Pleasant]. He preached first for us December 14, 1890 and every two weeks since, except during summer vacations and when he has sent occasional supplies. He has received thirty members into the church and dedicated twenty-five children and left us in much better condition than he found us."¹⁰³

The same parish recorded we "tender our sincere thanks to Brother Keyes for his faithful and devoted service during the series of meetings held here, also for the beautiful singing, which was an inspiration to all who heard it."¹⁰⁴ When he was pastor in Marshalltown he was spoken of as addressing "a splendid audience in his well known manner." While there, he was invited to address the Iowa Agricultural College at Ames.¹⁰⁵

Of B. F. Rogers, once State Missionary, the Mt. Pleasant parish wrote, "As pastor of this church he endeared

¹⁰²Universalist Church & Society of Waterloo, Iowa, Secretary's Record, Vol. I, p. 178.

¹⁰³First Universalist Church of Mount Pleasant, Iowa, Secretary's Record, Vol. 2, p. 35.

¹⁰⁴Ibid., p. 39.

¹⁰⁵Iowa Times Republican (Marshalltown), July 27, Sept. 14, 1893.

himself to our people by his generous nature, broad charity, many good works, his zeal for faith and his kindly attention."¹⁰⁶

In speaking of Miss Florence Kollock the Blue Ribbon Club wrote, "that her residence in our midst has been one of general usefulness and Christian kindness toward humanity; and it being the universal verdict that her presence was calculated to scatter sunshine and happiness about the social circle." They spoke repeatedly of her "kindness, gentleness and noble spirit."¹⁰⁷

In April of the following year

"Efforts were being made to have Rev. Miss Kollock back here again the coming summer and to this end parties are around for the purpose of finding out how much salary they can offer the lady. We sincerely trust those able to do so will contribute liberally, for Miss Kollock is a most valuable member to any city, and one that will do great good wherever she locates."¹⁰⁸

Of the Rev. Mr. Lewellen The Argo editor wrote, "He was a deep student and thinker and a man thoroughly posted on theological matters of the day. The family will be greatly missed from the social circles of the city and all will join 'The Argo' in wishing them abundant prosperity in the new home."¹⁰⁹

When the Rev. Mr. Adams closed his pastorate in the church in Marshalltown this notice appeared in the paper. "He is an able man and it will be hard to find his equal in

¹⁰⁶First Universalist Church of Mt. Pleasant, Iowa, Secretary's Record, Vol. 2, p. 56.

¹⁰⁷Waverly Republican, Aug. 1, 1878.

¹⁰⁸Ibid., April 3, 1879.

¹⁰⁹The Argo (West Union), May 16, 1894.

point of real ability and fearless intellectual and moral courage."¹¹⁰

"Mr. Ballou [J. W.] is a man of ability and a sociable gentleman and we regret to hear that he is going to leave Waverly."¹¹¹

When the Rev. Augusta Chapin was ill and knowing that she must have complete rest to recover, she presented her resignation to the Iowa City parish, this was their response.

"The members of the congregation and parish of the First Universalist church of Iowa City....do here record their measureless appreciation of her great service to them as a church and as individuals. Tending us [when] without a house of worship, shelterless and the victims of every vicissitude that can befall a church, paralyzed beyond the power of [for] good in the community, with neither place nor recognition, disintegrated and disorganized with no rallying point nor common purpose, by the inspiration of her energy and [the] example of her self-sacrifice the scattered flock has been gathered to its fold, friends beyond our former borders have been raised up to us and our organized work has been manifest."¹¹²

The "Rev. Miss Chapin of Chicago delivered a sermon at the Universalist Church yesterday evening that abounded in fine thoughts. The Reverend lady has a happy command of vigorous English, is an easy and forcible speaker, and was listened to very attentively by a very large audience."¹¹³

The "Rev. Fidelia Gillette....was smart, well educated and [a] fine speaker and she preached eloquently to the satisfaction of her congregation in New Sharon....This lady is from Michigan and is said to have been for

¹¹⁰Marshalltown Times-Republican, Oct. 25, 1883.

¹¹¹Waverly Republican, May 9, 1872.

¹¹²First Universalist Church of Iowa City, Iowa, Secretary's Record, Vol. 1, pp. 89 and 90.

¹¹³Waverly Republican, February 15, 1877.

twenty years in the employ of the National Lecture Association and recently entered the ministry for conscientious reasons.¹¹⁴

Some notable men like the Revs. J. P. Sanford and W. P. Payne and J. R. Sage did not remain in the Universalist ministry but served the state in other capacities. Mr. Sage, who had studied for the ministry in the home of Dr. D. P. and Mrs. Mary A. Livermore, came to Iowa in 1869 to become the pastor of the Mitchellville Universalist Church. During his pastorate he worked closely with Uncle Tom Mitchell in raising funds for the Mitchell Seminary, erecting the building and supervising its operation. In 1877 he left the ministry and in cooperation with Ralph Robinson established the Newton Journal. Two years later he sold out and became the editor of the Cedar Rapids Republican. In 1883 he sold his interest and became the editor of the Des Moines Capital. When it changed management he worked for a time as a correspondent and editorial writer on the Chicago Inter-Ocean. Upon the creation of the Iowa Weather and Crop Service in 1890 he was appointed the director, which position he held for the next twenty years.¹¹⁵ Mr. Payne like Mr. Sage came west to Mitchellville to teach in the Seminary. He moved to Nevada where he became the principal of the school and later purchased the Nevada Representative. Aside from the newspaper work he spent much time and energy in the interests of the Nevada Public Library, and was active in the Iowa State Library Association. "In the death of Father Payne, Nevada

¹¹⁴History of Mahaska County, Iowa, Des Moines, 1878, p. 512.

¹¹⁵Edgar R. Harlan, "Notable Deaths," Annals of Iowa (3) Vol. 12, 1915-1921, p. 383.

and Story County mourns a splendid citizen and one who spent nearly half a century within the borders of the county, devoting his every wakeful moment to something for the good of the community with which he had so closely identified himself."¹¹⁶

Of the Rev. J. P. Sanford who had become a lecturer there were many articles in the newspapers. He was a colorful and convincing minister much in demand in the Iowa parishes. He seemed just as popular on the lecture platform.

"Col. Sanford is a success and occupies a proud position in the front rank of American Lyceum orators. His power over an audience is wonderful, his eloquence, wit and descriptive powers all combine to make him what he is, the most entertaining and agreeable lecturer it has ever been our fortune to hear."¹¹⁷

The Rev. W. A. Pratt went to Cedar Rapids in 1885. Three years later he received a call from a large congregation in Minneapolis, which he refused; doubtless foregoing personal advancement in the interest of the Iowa parish that needed his leadership. The Cedar Rapids Standard wrote,

"The Universalist congregation are to be congratulated on their pastor's decision. With literary and scientific attainments of the highest order, coupled with never tiring industry in his chosen work, Mr. Pratt is building up his church."¹¹⁸

His people in later years wrote that the church had been closed for over a year because a few had been tactless. He came to a closed church and a divided congregation.

¹¹⁶ First Universalist Church in Mitchellville of Polk County, Iowa, Secretary's Record, Vol. 2, p. 41, (clipping).

¹¹⁷ Storm Lake Pilot, May 17, 1876.

¹¹⁸ Cedar Rapids Standard, Nov. 29, 1888.

He brought the "idealism of youth, together with the fine ability to organize the frayed ends of a tangled situation into a working unit. Progress was again made and success was assured."¹¹⁹ At the time of his death in 1934 the Iowa Convention made a record of their "appreciation of his fine fraternal spirit, his large abilities and his unfailing loyalty."¹²⁰

Of Dr. Amos Crum and ^{the} Rev. B. F. Snook much has been written in many parts of Iowa because of their unusual personalities and capabilities. They served a number of parishes as pastors and all of them in some capacity as the State Missionary or Superintendent for the Iowa Universalist Convention.

Biographical Obituary of Dr. Crum

Dr. Amos Crum died in Boone, January 29, 1900 and his co-laborer, the Rev. B. F. Snook, wrote the following biographical obituary which was published in response to the requests of his many friends.

"His decease was the result of [brain] injuries received on the fifth of last September, when he was run over and seriously hurt by an unknown cyclist. [in Boone]

"His condition defied the best medical skill of the local physicians. In December, accompanied by his wife, he went to Oshkosh, Wisconsin, where his son, Joseph, is engaged in practicing medicine. The tenderest and most skillful care here could afford only temporary relief. On Friday of last week they returned to Boone. He was so weak that he was [barely] conscious at times of his surroundings. Occasionally he would recognize members of the family or the good friends who called, but these recognitions were only of momentary duration.

¹¹⁹ Rev. W.A.W. Argow, An Historical Sketch of the Peoples Church, 1925, p. 8, (pamphlet).

¹²⁰ Iowa Universalist Convention, Secretary's Record, Vol. 4, p. 150, (hereafter I.U.C. Secretary's Record).

"Rev. Amos Crum was born at Carlinville, Illinois, October 4, 1846, and lived into his fifty-fourth year. His early education was received in his native town, but later he was graduated from Lombard University of Galesburg. On visiting his old pastor at Hinsdale, Illinois, Dr. W. S. Balch, he decided to study for the ministry and became a student with Dr. Balch and preached in Hinsdale from time to time.

"After his ordination his first pastorate was at Muskegon, Michigan, where he was married to Sophronia L. Watson, the loving and tender wife who survives him. He was subsequently called to pastorates at Hinsdale, Corrunna and Bay City, Michigan. About sixteen years ago he settled as pastor of the First Universalist Church of Dubuque. Six years later he was called to the pastorate of St. Paul's Universalist Church, Webster City; was subsequently recalled to Dubuque, but later returned to Webster City, where, with his accustomed fidelity and ability he served his church another term as pastor, the result being the rebuilding and remodeling of the edifice into the present beautiful temple ... his fitting memorial monument.

"His great ability and efficiency fitted him for a wider field and he was engaged as state superintendent of the Universalist churches of Iowa. This position he filled with distinguished honor to himself and [to] the cause of Christ, of which he was the able manly Christian representative. His faithfulness to his convictions of truth, his devoted love for his church, his untiring energy and constant work, his unselfish and humane heart and [his] good will for all attracted to him the highest admiration of his own church and denomination; and not that alone, but also the best and highest honor of all others who knew him, regardless of creed or church. He was a true and living Christian, the highest type of man. In Webster City where he was dearly loved by all, he was just what he was everywhere else. His closing work was at Boone, where a completing and beautiful temple proclaims the inspiring power of his influence, leavening for great good where he received the same love and sympathy from the people and friends devoted to his good work.¹²¹

"Everybody loved and respected him for his purity of character and upright, Christian life. He never knew what it was to have an enemy, and as a friend he was abiding, faithful, zealous and true. He was well known and highly honored throughout the state and his works will live after him and be as enduring as his memory.

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Webster City Freeman, Feb. 6, 1900.

Aside from his genial whole-souled manner he was one of the most scholarly and learned men in the state and as a platform orator he had few peers. The church, of which he was a leading light, has suffered an irreparable loss, while the state of Iowa has lost one of its truest, noblest and best Christian citizens."¹²²

"Benjamin Franklin Snook was born in McArthur county, Ohio, June 20th, 1835, and died at Webster City, Iowa, December 4th, 1902. When he was two years of age his parents moved to Indiana, settling near Crawfordsville, on a farm, where their son grew to manhood. In early life he united with the Christian church and later became a minister of that church. In 1855 he moved with his parents to Iowa, locating in Mahaska county. On October 4th, 1875 he was united in marriage to Miss Catherine Moore, and to them seven children were born, five boys and two girls, all of whom survive him except the second son who died a few years ago in St. Louis. He has resided in the state continuously since, with the exception of four years when he was pastor of the Universalist church in Wasau, Wisconsin. He left the Christian church and for some time was a convert to the faith of the Seventh Day Advents, laboring among them as a minister. From that faith he came to the Universalist Church about thirty five years ago and began his work as a missionary for that church. In 1872 he located in Webster City and devoted his labors between this city and Steamboat Rock until 1875. He was pastor during his years of ministry at Vinton, [Marion], Cedar Rapids, Tipton, Cedar Falls, Bloomfield, Clarinda, Iowa Falls, Steamboat Rock, Webster City and Wasau, Wisconsin. And his work in these places was essentially that of the missionary. He organized societies of his faith and built churches in Tipton, Webster City, Steamboat Rock, Storm Lake, and Wasau, Wisconsin. He went abroad in 1880 and after returning home devoted much of his time to lecturing on his travels in Palestine. He was a man loved and respected by everyone and his death is widely mourned."¹²³

"No man within all the range of our acquaintance came so near living in absolute harmony with his fellow-man as did Rev. B. F. Snook. The genial and polished manner and pleasant smile with which he greeted everybody; his kindness of heart toward all and his upright character and pure life has made him an example in the community where he has spent his best years. Everybody was his friend. His death will be mourned by more people than

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Ibid., Jan. 30, 1900.

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A newspaper clipping obtained from his daughter, Mrs. Ella Burleson, Webster City, Iowa.

any that has occurred in our city in many a year."¹²⁴
 "Everyone who knew Mr. Snook recognized in him one of
 God's noblemen, for his every day life was an exempli-
 fication of the precepts he taught in the pulpit.
 Socially and other wise he was universally esteemed. He
 was a man of great breadth of mind, liberal in all
 things."¹²⁵ - "He was a man of marked ability; rich and
 varied culture; unquestioned purity of character and
 praiseworthy aims, (there was none of the Pharisee in his
 makeup), a man of rare intellect; of fine sensibilities
 and of large sphere of affection."¹²⁶

The recognition of the ministers' wives paid by the
 Dubuque church at the time of their twenty-fifth anniversary,
 is an appropriate recognition for their work throughout the
 state.

"A word or two I'll write
 About our pastor's wives-
 Who share their husbands lives.
 Who brighten all their labors,
 And lighten their expense,
 And always have a way
 To save the pounds and pence,
 That the husbands may have books,
 And the children may have shoes,
 And still have something left
 To buy anything they choose -
 Are leaders in good deeds
 At Sabbath school can teach;
 While some if called upon,
 Could a good sermon preach.
 All honor to the wives
 Of the pastors, far and near."¹²⁷

Many of them were unknown except in their own parishes where
 they did much to keep the church auxiliaries, such as the
 Sunday School and the Ladies Aid, functioning effectively.

¹²⁴ Webster City Journal, December 4, 1902.

¹²⁵ A clipping, source unknown, obtained from Mrs. Ella
 Burleson, Webster City, Iowa.

¹²⁶ Iowa Oddfellow (Maxwell, Ia.) Nov. 1, 1903.

¹²⁷ Dubuque Daily Herald, May 27, 1883.

The success of many a pastorate has been built upon the work of these unsung laborers in the field. Some were active in a public way such as Mrs. Erasmus Manford, Mary A. Livermore, and Mrs. Nettie Sanford as reform lecturers; Mrs. Charlotte Porter, Mrs. Sophronia L. Crum, Mrs. G. S. Gowdy, Mrs. Agnes Ralph, Mrs. Mabel Dotter and Mrs. Eliza Curtis Everton were ministers in their own right and could take over the services in their husband's parish, whenever necessary, or preach at nearby mission points. Mrs. Crum, Mrs. Dotter, Mrs. Ralph and Mrs. Porter were all called upon to substitute for their husbands during their illness and upon their death to complete their husband's contract with the church.

The sermons of the Universalist ministers of this era were largely doctrinal. They were called upon to debate and prove their beliefs constantly. They drew people to their churches through presenting what they and their sect held as truth. Some examples would clarify the type of sermon that might have been heard if one could step backward in time some fifty years.

The Rev. Father Gowdy, "the crowned saint of our faith who through the long, long years loved and lived Universalism",¹²⁸ said in Eldora in 1874, "Is God's love so weak he would let his children suffer forever if he could save them? We believe that God is a God of justice, and that he will reward his creatures according to their works. ... We implore

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I. U. C., Secretary's Record, Vol. 3, p. 133.

you to do good because it brings happiness in this world and greater glory in the one to come; because the goodness of God to man merits our love, our adoration, our service, our praise, our truest worship."¹²⁹

The Rev. Anna J. Norris in preaching in the West Union church in 1889 quoted "Heaven's gate is shut to him who comes alone, Save thou a soul, and it shall save thine own." It was a very fine sermon on the Father, God, universal salvation, one's character, and one's personal and social responsibility.¹³⁰

Dr. Stocking in Dubuque used this as his text, "But to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things and we in him." Cor. I, 8:6. He said that God was changeless. It is man's ideas about God that have changed.

"With that thought of God's Paternity, we may have the consciousness of being one of God's family. It is he that has created all our worships, reverences, tenderesses and loves. These have come forth from his heart. He made them in us because they were first in Him. All we can imagine of wisdom, loveliness, grace, tenderness are in Him, only infinitely more than we can imagine. All our aspirations, loves and honors center in Him. 'For of Him are all things and we in Him' " "God has made of one blood all nations of men to dwell on all the face of the earth. ... If we love one another God dwelleth in us and His love is perfected in us. God is love, and he that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God and God in him."

Dr. Balch at the same convention in 1883 told how Jesus was tempted by the world's strongest temptations, fleshly indulgence, love of praise, and the ambition to be

¹²⁹ Eldora Herald, Feb. 24, 1874.

¹³⁰ The Argo (West Union), Jan. 30, 1889.

great. He held true to His resolution to obey His Father in Heaven, to teach and save mankind by showing them how to live and not by any set system, ritual or hierarchy. "He brought (his disciples) face to face with God that in his light they might themselves judge what is right."

He taught us to

"Love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy might and thy neighbor as thyself." Near the end of his sojourn on earth he told his disciples he was soon to leave them.... The supper ended he girded himself with a napkin and washed his disciples' feet in token of humility and true greatness... the sacrifice of self for the good of others. He then... said, 'A new commandment give I unto you, that ye also love one another as I have loved you; By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples if ye have love one for another.' That is sufficient to salvation... [love] should be the one requirement for church membership, all these sects divide our Christian strength. Paul thought it sufficient, 'Love worketh no ill to his neighbors, therefore love is the fulfilling of law.'" Peter thought it sufficient, "'Seeing you have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently.'" John thought it sufficed for he said, "Everyone that loveth is born of God and knoweth God. He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love. And he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God and God in Him.'" We should all "follow the leading of His holy spirit as Jesus taught, in humility, in holiness, and meekness, in sincerity of heart, and purity of thought and rest in the blessed hope of reunion with the beloved in realms of light and life and love."¹³¹

In 1879 the Rev. Karl Gerner preached on the profession of the Liberal Christian Church which is practically the same as the Universalist Profession including a liberty clause. The group later affiliated with the Iowa Universalist Convention. He said,

"1. We believe in God, a unity, supreme source of

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Dubuque Daily Herald, May 27, 1883.

wisdom, infinite, eternal.

- "2. We believe in Christ, chosen son of God, who came to save by teaching us to obey God's laws, to save men from their sins not from their punishment.
- "3. We believe each child of God is an heir to immortality, we believe in punishment here and hereafter which is disciplinary.
- '4. We believe in the Bible but not that it was plenary inspired. It was a literature of a peculiar people living in a distant age, it contains the truths of God and a moral system."

They believed it was the main mission of religion to make men live peaceably, lovingly and virtuously together on earth. They objected to a set creed because it retarded progress, that deeds not creeds made a man a Christian.

"We believe our statements of belief are right because [they are] in accord with [the] scriptures, echoed by the wisest teachers our race has known, [they are] reasonable, [they are] not counter to truths of science and philosophy, [they give] more faith in God, man, religion, [the] Bible and [the] triumph of divine love, [and are] adapted to present needs. [They are] right because they appeal to the understanding and common sense[they are] more intelligent and practical than the ideas of the theologians of the Middle Ages. We are living in an age of science and reason and it can only be around the banner of Christianity with its practical ideas of life, its devotion to truth, its philosophy of love, that we can hope to overcome all the evil of the world."¹³²

Rev. J. L. Everton was considered one of the finest ministers that the church at Osage ever had. The young people of his church were responsible for the publicity on his sermons in the local paper. These are some of the ideas gleaned from that source concerning his type of sermons. "The race of people that has the greatest individuality and freedom of

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Storm Lake Pilot, June 18, 1879, (the church was spoken of as the Universalist a little later).

thought is the race that has accomplished the most. In history of churches we find that a strong individuality has always been connected with their origin and growth. The men who have built up civilization, education, and government have been those who stood by their convictions." In speaking of Ingersoll he said, "He was as honest in his belief as I am in mine. I care not what religion a man may follow, if he is honest in his belief I respect him for his belief, and I would not have him hide it from the world. Rather would I be an honest outcast because of my belief than an accepted individual and know in my heart I was a hypocrite."¹³³ In speaking of temperance and salvation he said, "I believe in saving souls in a natural and scientific way, not by any methods of emotion. I have very little faith in a soul that is saved in a moment but I have all the faith in the world in the soul that is made during growth and development and [they] are the souls that are going to make this world live and bring forth the highest and best."¹³⁴

Iowa followed the lead of the General Convention in the matter of a formal creed. In 1803 the Winchester Profession of Faith was adopted at the convention at Winchester, New Hampshire which served the denomination for nearly a century, or until 1899. It reads,

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Mitchell County Press (Osage), Oct. 5, 1899.

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Ibid., Dec. 7, 1899.

Winchester Profession of Faith

- "1. We believe that the Holy Scriptures of the old and new Testaments contain a revelation of the character of God and of the duty, interest and final destination of mankind.
- "2. We believe that there is one God, whose nature is Love, revealed in one Lord Jesus Christ, by one Holy Spirit of Grace, who will finally restore the whole family of mankind to holiness and happiness.
- "3. We believe that holiness and true happiness are inseparably connected, and that believers ought to be careful to maintain order and practice good works; for these things are good and profitable unto men."¹³⁵

Our forbears

"had had bitter experience with compulsory creeds and did not propose to set up a new one, however roomy, that might imprison their spirits. They therefore added the following liberty clause."

"While we adopt a general Profession of Belief.... we leave it to the churches and societies to continue or adopt within themselves such more particular articles of faith as may appear to them best under their peculiar circumstances, provided that they do not disagree with our general profession or plan."¹³⁶

Thus broadly interpreted and without compulsory authority this profession stood unassailed. Unfortunately, in 1870 at the Gloucester Centennial attempting to organize the church more efficiently, they wrote the Winchester Profession into the organic law of the General Convention, with the liberty clause left out. "The unity of spiritual freemen was exchanged for the lockstep of the theological drill master," and at once men of intellectual integrity began protesting about the

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Frederic Williams Perkins, Beliefs Commonly Held Among Us, Boston, 1940, p. 38, (pamphlet).

¹³⁶

Ibid., p. 43.

phrasing of that compulsory profession. "For the next twenty-five years every session of the General Convention was a gladiatorial arena in which the question of creed revision was fought over." The Rev. James Gorton and the Rev. W. L. Swan presented a resolution to the Iowa Universalist Convention at Mitchellville in the fall of 1894.

"Whereas, the policy and practice of the Universalist Church for the greater portion of its existence has been purely congregational, in which every local church was permitted freely to frame its own creed and conditions of membership, and

"Whereas, the authoritative requirement of the Winchester Profession as a condition of fellowship is a reversal of the principle and practice of our church, and

"Whereas, many ministers in receiving members into the church refuse to make the Winchester Profession or any other dogmatic statement a condition of fellowship and membership in the church, therefore

"Resolved: that in no spirit of antagonism to the Winchester Profession, or to the General Convention, we, the Universalist Convention of Iowa, respectfully petition the General Convention to make such changes in its constitution and general laws as will permit ministers and churches to return to a congregational policy, and each church to determine for itself the conditions upon which persons shall be received into membership and fellowship there-in."¹³⁷

The solution for the entire denomination was to restore the liberty clause and make the Profession not a test but a testimony. So at Boston in 1899 the Convention adopted the "Five Principles"¹³⁸

- "1. The Universal Fatherhood of God.
- "2. The Spiritual Authority and leadership of His Son, Jesus Christ.

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I.U.C., Secretary's Record, Vol. 3, p. 73.

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Perkins, op. cit., pp. 43 and 44.

- "3. The trustworthiness of the Bible as containing a revelation from God.
- '4. The certainty of just retribution for sin.
- "5. The final harmony of all souls with God."¹³⁹

They enacted a liberty clause which stated,

"The Winchester Profession is commended as containing these principles, but neither this nor any other precise form of words is required as a condition of fellowship, provided always that the principles above stated be professed."¹⁴⁰

In the early part of this period the state was divided into five districts organized as associations; namely, the Turkey River Association, the Mississippi Valley Association, the Central Association, the Des Moines Valley Association and the Southwestern Association. They held conven-¹⁴¹tions during the summer months from May to August. The local parishes were also affiliated with and sent delegates to the Iowa State Universalist Convention which met annually from 1870 to 1900. The site of these conventions and the list of officials may be noted in the appendix. The ministers and the leading laymen and laywomen gathered to conduct organizational business and receive spiritual inspiration from the denominational leaders. Dr. Nash in speaking to the Webster City Convention in 1899 "gave utterance to a masterpiece, composed of force, logic, pleading and prophecy. It was¹⁴² enough of itself to make a convention great."

¹³⁹ Ibid., p. 46.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid., p. 45.

¹⁴¹ Universalist Register and Almanac, Boston, 1873.

¹⁴² I. U. C., Secretary's Record, Vol. 3, p. 95.

Their state records revealed both missionary outlook and activity. In 1883 there were twenty-five church buildings and they set as their goal two hundred and fifty. The record of the field worker, missionary or superintendent was very incomplete but around 1870 the Rev. B. F. Snook, a new recruit to the ministry was serving the state. In 1879 and 1880 the Rev. Ira Eberhart was designated as the State Superintendent. The following year the Rev. C. K. Gibson was the missionary. Beginning in 1882 and serving for three years was the Rev. B. F. Rogers, the state missionary. He was instructed "To revive inactive parishes and establish new ones, assisting them to secure worthy ministers, to interest our isolated friends . . . and to have in charge the various plans adopted for obtaining needed convention funds." Two years later the Rev. B. Brunning was actively working with Boone as a home center, 1893 found the Rev. Mrs. Sophronia Crum, the first woman missionary in Iowa, serving the scattered parishes. A year later the Rev. John Arnoup, as state missionary, held services in West Union. In 1896 the Convention voted to employ a Superintendent; financial shortages

¹⁴³ A clipping loaned by Mrs. Ella Burleson, Webster City, Iowa.

¹⁴⁴ Universalist Register and Almanac, Boston, 1879 & 1880.

¹⁴⁵ Boone County Democrat, March 30, 1881.

¹⁴⁶ Universalist Register and Almanac, Boston, 1882-1885.

¹⁴⁷ Boone Standard, May 23, 1885.

¹⁴⁸ Universalist Register and Almanac, Boston, 1893.

¹⁴⁹ The Argo, (West Union), July 4, 1894.

hindered this work, so that not until the following year was the Rev. Amos Crum employed by the board. He gave unusually splendid service until his untimely death in Boone in 1899, when his wife temporarily carried on the work for another year.¹⁵⁰

Always the meager financial resources hindered all projects which they might undertake. In 1883 the Executive Board was "to take immediate measures for raising a permanent fund of two hundred thousand dollars, the income of which only shall be expended in the interests of church extension in Iowa." This goal was never realized, in fact no measurable beginning was effected.¹⁵¹

In the eighties the ministers of the state held an institute or college preceeding the delegate assembly of the convention, wherein their own particular problems and needs were discussed. The stimulation of fellowship and the intellectual intercourse seemed eminently worth while.¹⁵²

The Rev. C. L. Waite, of Storm Lake spoke in the convention on the position of the Sunday School in the church.

"We need to impress our doctrine upon our children..... We should take advantage of the liberal tendency of our times to make and build up a strong, religious faith.... The Sunday School ought to be the foundation of churches. A genuine missionary force."¹⁵³

In the last decade of the nineteenth century the

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I. U. C., Secretary's Record, Vol. 3, pp. 72,104.

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Dubuque Daily Herald, Sept. 21, 1883.

¹⁵²

Ibid., Sept. 21, 1883.

¹⁵³

Ibid., Sept. 21, 1883.

young people became organized on a state wide basis under the national Y.P.C.U. leadership and held separate conventions that were very popular, commanding a large attendance and excellent speakers. The tenth annual session was held in Osage, June 29, 1899. A score of towns were represented, Waterloo sending twelve delegates. The general theme was "The Good of the Union." Ten ministers were present to assist the young people who presented panel discussions on their problems. It lasted four days¹⁵⁴ and as Herbert Stoughton remarked was more widely attended than the church convention.

Concern over the danger to the Universalist Church, a liberal group, in being "luke warm" about their church is expressed in the following resolution. "That we earnestly urge our people everywhere, not to be less courteous toward other churches, but to be a great deal more emphatic in their talking, working, praying and paying for their own."¹⁵⁵

In the fifty-sixth annual session at Mount Pleasant in 1898 they voted to sell the church at Iowa City to the Unitarian conference for \$3,500. The first Universalist Church in Iowa created at a great sacrifice by ^{the} Rev. A. R. Gardner and the other pioneers had become so inactive there seemed no hope that it could ever be revived.¹⁵⁶ It was not the first sale of a Universalist church property in Iowa

154

Mitchell County Press, June 29, 1899.

155

Dubuque Daily Herald, Sept. 21, 1883.

156

I. U. C., Secretary's Record, Vol. 3, p. 83.

however, because the ones at Newton and Waverly were disposed of in 1886 and the one at Oskaloosa in 1895.¹⁵⁷

At every session resolutions were passed showing group support for all the social reforms of the period, indicating an interest in and a concern for the problems of this world.

The chief concerns were their state missionary endeavor and the holding of the gains already valiantly made. The period of bitter controversy was beginning to wane. By nineteen hundred there were no more religious debates although there might be controversy in the press and the pulpit and on the street corners. Organization, financial stability, ministerial leadership and lay loyalty were the problems of the day.

Alfred S. Cole, librarian at the Universalist Historical Library at Tufts College wrote of this period in the denomination as a whole. Iowa, being closer to the frontier, perhaps was somewhat retarded but most of what he said was substantially true here.

"Universalism was, after a hard long fight, winning its way to respectability. ... Everywhere the ancient prejudices were softening and the rigors of the old-time Calvinism abating. Although the Orthodox preachers shouted hell-fire from the pulpits the old ring had gone from the voice and the assurance from the heart.¹⁵⁸.... The hard names hurled were padded a bit. The hard lean years seemed to be vanishing into the past. The cruder days of theological debate and argument, the aggressive

157

I. U. C., President's Notebook.

158

Alfred S. Cole, "Historical Backgrounds of the Universalist Movement", IV, The Christian Leader, Boston, Oct. 16, 1937, p. 1320.

fight for one's faith were receding into the past, and dreams of a greater and more powerful organization appeared on the horizon. Theology was losing its grip and colorful interest; a new era was definitely dawning. Theology was toppling and great social problems began to press to the forefront."¹⁵⁹

Liberalism confronted a new era.

The Universalist leaders planned to build an effective organization and with their "glorious creed" and their "reasonable sane approach to moral and religious problems" attract many people to its standard. They felt they had "the message and hope for millions.... Science, human reason, literature and the spirit of the age seemed to be on the side."¹⁶⁰ of their faith. So with high hopes they faced a new century.

159

Ibid., pp. 1320 and 1323.

160

Ibid., p. 1320.

Chapter VI

LEADERSHIP AND THEOLOGY IN THE NEW CENTURY:

1900-1943

"The rosy hued liberalism of the past century and the philosophy and theology of that period are gone. We are not so sure of our way because the ceaseless activity of the present earth struggles occupies our attention and effort."

In the first ten years of the twentieth century the emphasis was on the social gospel. People studied and wrestled with the problems of capital, labor, poverty, injustice, graft and greed. This

"new call to fight social evils, the crusade to right the wrongs and root out the injustices fired the imaginations of Universalists. The hopes for expansion and the social gospel went glimmering with the Great War. Through the war and post war period Liberalism floundered with all the rest. It seemed as if the promises of a perfected world, and the final triumph of good, the rule of a kind Heavenly Father ... the very foundations of religious liberalism ... were receding into the dim distance.... Ruthless have been the hands of reaction all over the world in the destruction of liberal traditions and forms of religion. In a sort of bewilderment and uncertainty, liberals with many other Christians have been simply marking time."¹

So wrote Alfred Cole of the Universalist denomination.

Iowa was influenced by this general trend of thought in the nation and the world. Being primarily a rural state the problems of capital and labor were not in the early

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Alfred S. Cole, "Historical Backgrounds of the Universalist Movement," IV, The Christian Leader, Boston, Oct. 23, 1937, p. 1354.

decades as compelling as other social problems such as prohibition and woman suffrage. There was a small time lag, inasmuch as the identification of the denomination with the doctrine of evolution and other new scientific discoveries continued into the twentieth century in this state.

At every session of the State Convention for the first forty-three years of this century a resolution was adopted concerning temperance, prohibition enforcement, and then (again) prohibition. In 1911 they wrote, "recognizing the need of temperance in the life of man [it] put itself on record as opposed to the manufacture and sale of intoxicants as a beverage."² In 1916 at Sioux City they recorded that "we also rejoice in the fact that we now have statewide prohibition in Iowa and favor every lawful means of securing its perpetuation."³ Two years later the following appeared in the record, "Recalling that our Universalist Church has always stood staunchly for the Prohibition Movement, we rejoice in the final success of National Prohibition and urge all of our people to constant and intelligent support of all efforts for its enforcement. We also endorse every effort looking toward world-wide Prohibition."⁴ In recent years since the repeal of the 18th amendment they have reiterated the century old slogan again and again, "total abstinence for the

² Iowa Universalist Convention, Secretary's Record Vol. 3, p. 320. (hereafter I.U.C. will stand for Iowa Universalist Convention)

³ Ibid., Vol. 3, p. 468.

⁴ Ibid., Vol. 3, p. 532.

individual and prohibition for the nation."⁵ The Convention of 1941 found them adopting a temperance resolution, a part of which read, "And whereas the first line of defense is the moral character of the nation's youth; Be it resolved that this body is opposed to the sale of intoxicants within five miles of any army camp or any Federal defense project."⁶

From the Convention in Des Moines in 1912 appeared the following on woman suffrage, "Now that the crusade for the extension of the ballot to women has reached a stage where it compells the alignment of all thinking people on one side or the other, we feel it only fitting that this Convention go on record as in favor of this further step toward democracy in our political organization."⁷ Then in 1919 they expressed their approval of the action taken by the Federal government. "As the Universalist Church has held open both its schools and its pulpits to women as well as to men, we want to express our great satisfaction in the passage of the Federal suffrage amendment by both Houses of Congress, and by the Iowa legislature."⁸

At the state meetings their interests were revealed also by the special speakers. Rabbi Mannheimer addressed the delegates assembled. Harvey Dee Brown, a socialist leader from Milwaukee, spoke to the joint assemblage of Unitarians

⁵
Ibid., Vol. 5, p. 43.

⁶
Ibid., Vol. 5, p. 106.

⁷
Ibid., Vol. 3, p. 346.

⁸
Ibid., Vol. 3, p. 533.

and Universalists.⁹ Flora Dunlap discussed social settlements and their relation to the church at the 1911 session in Boone.¹⁰

During the twentieth century two great wars have shaken world civilization. Before the first World War began, the yearly conference in 1911 "Resolved that this Convention deeply deploring the waste of war do again affirm itself in fullest cooperation with the God-inspired world movement for peace and do urge all those in its fellowship to use their influence in behalf of all practical peace measures."¹¹ In the fall of 1914 they recommended that "In view of the horrors of the present European War, an opportunity for extraordinary service is opened to our denominations (Unitarian and Universalist) standing as they do pre-eminently for the principle of brotherhood, we recommend that the Churches of this Convention take an active part in the peace propaganda of the coming years."¹² Five years later the war was over but the peace treaty was not yet assured, so they expressed their position in that regard.

"Since the cardinal principle of the Brotherhood of Man had been at the very heart of our Church's life, we are deeply rejoiced at the world's increasing efforts to bring this idea into practical effect between nations and races and we favor the League of Nations and urge speedy ratification of its constitution by the United States Senate. Whatever may seem to be its present defects, we believe that this movement toward

⁹ Ibid., Vol. 3, p. 326.

¹⁰ Ibid., Vol. 3, p. 316.

¹¹ Ibid., Vol. 3, p. 319.

¹² Ibid., Vol. 3, p. 416.

international cooperation is a great step forward in civilization, out of which we may confidently hope will grow a practical realization of the ideals for which our church has consistently stood."¹³

In 1923, after we had remained out of the League, they resolved "that we favor the participation of our government in an inclusive and democratic organization for the security of world peace." At Waterloo twelve years later they urged that the church promote an educational program that would improve our understanding of and friendship with other nations and peoples and unite with other denominations and societies in promoting this work.¹⁴ By 1940 the world was again at war and propaganda was being employed to generate hysteria and panic, so the delegate assembly resolved that

"Whereas there is real danger that this crisis will be used to promote militarism, fanatic ecclesiasticism, and a disregard for life and property; Therefore be it resolved that we appeal to all people to be alert in helping to protect weak and unpopular individuals and groups, and ever to keep in mind that the mob is always and everywhere the worst enemy of the rule of reason and the best friend of tyranny."¹⁵

Since organized peace was not then achieved the denomination was putting out flags of warning against dangerous propaganda and the evils of hate. This attitude is shown in a resolution a year later than the one above.

"Whereas, we have avowed our faith in the universal brotherhood of man and the supreme worth of every human personality, and whereas, we painfully observe the almost universal program of hate propaganda which is

¹³
Ibid., Vol. 3, p. 532.

¹⁴
Ibid., Vol. 4, p. 198.

¹⁵
Ibid., Vol. 5, p. 45.

causing even professed Christians to hate their fellowmen, be it resolved that we will not allow this insidious propaganda to cause us to hate any human being of any nation, race, religion or class."¹⁶

The Iowa Universalist Convention has directed the thinking of its members to keep them abreast mentally of the events and problems of their day. From the records of 1913 there appears this statement,

"Since Iowa is leading in many civic reforms and our church has always stood for progress upward, it is fitting that we go on record as in favor of extending the ballot to women, abolishing the use of intoxicants, and opposing the traffic in white slaves, and we endorse all other efforts for bettering our social condition."¹⁷

Not always has there been unanimity of opinion when the questions of the League, the repeal of prohibition, the refugees, or the conscientious objectors was open for discussion. But the right of everyone to express an honest opinion was universally recognized.

The annual sessions of the State Convention have been held regularly with but one exception. This was in 1917 when the parishes voted against it and instructed the executive board to send the amount that might have been used for convention expenses to the American Red Cross and the Army Y.M.C.A. One hundred fifty dollars was sent to each.¹⁸ In 1910 there was no meeting in the state but the delegates went to Minneapolis where they attended a Tri-State Convention in

¹⁶

Ibid., Vol. 5, p. 102.

¹⁷

Ibid., Vol. 3, p. 385.

¹⁸

Ibid., Vol. 3, p. 480.

the "Church of the Redeemer" which included the representatives from the churches in Minnesota, Wisconsin, and Iowa.

"Though the weather was extremely warm [June] and every session full to crowding, the general opinion rated the Convention a success. The attendance probably was as large as it would have been had the three states met separately. The enthusiasm generated must have been greater, and the larger and closer acquaintance and the spirit of fellowship which the joint convention made possible, will greatly strengthen our cause in the North-West."¹⁹

It appeared a success, although suggestions have been made since that time for another Tri-State or Dual State meeting, and the greater distances to the convention city have appeared a handicap. Many of the average delegates could not afford either the additional time or the funds that the longer trip would necessitate.

Five joint conventions were held with the Unitarians.

1911 - Boone - Universalist church.

1912 - Des Moines - Unitarian church.

1914 - Cedar Rapids, Universalist church.

1916 - Sioux City, Unitarian church.

1923 - Iowa City, Unitarian church.

It was a splendid plan for the practical cooperation of the religious liberals in Iowa. However, there were two factors that complicated the sessions somewhat. The Universalists had always combined business and inspiration in their annual meeting, because the parish representatives wanted an active

¹⁹

Ibid., Vol. 3, p. 282.

voice in the convention's business affairs, in the traditional American pattern. The Unitarian Conference was almost wholly inspirational. The program never provided enough time for the Universalists to transact their business²⁰ and there was too much wasted time for the Unitarians. They felt they could not financially afford two conferences, one for business and one for inspiration and they did not wish to delegate all the business matters to the Executive Board. Another objection made in 1923 was that the young people could not attend an October meeting as easily as they could one in June, since most of them were in high schools and colleges. So the Universalist body had a business session in the summer that year and only a few went to the joint Iowa City Conference. Perhaps these differences might have been compromised but the more conservative group was not inclined to continue the experiment.

In 1914 there were eight parishes in each of the denominations. It was the seventy-second session for the Universalists and the thirty-seventh for the Unitarians. During that meeting the latter in extending an invitation said,

"In as much as the Liberal Religious forces of Iowa are scattered over a large state and the organized churches are few in number [compared with those in other denominations] this isolated condition tends to produce loneliness and often discouragement in the hearts of ministers and laymen, it is helpful for these kindred folks to gather together in Convention

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Ibid., Vol. 3, p. 343.

and Conference, that they may enjoy the fellowship of a common faith and endeavor, and receive encouragement through the friendly counsel, the expression of good will and hospitality."²¹

Their common faith and not their differences were emphasized by the joint meetings.

The Universalists appear to have issued the original invitation in 1911 and it was they who withdrew in 1923, apparently feeling that the disadvantages outweighed the advantages. In 1927 when union with other liberals was being discussed generally, Iowa gave this expression on the question.

"Be it resolved that while we regard any merger as impracticable under existing conditions, we favor the most friendly cooperation with liberal-minded people of other denominations when possible without impairing the identity, efficiency and distinct mission of the Universalist Church. In any negotiations looking to this end, we would urge that the Unitarians, our historic and theological allies, as well as other liberal groups, who are in agreement with us in liberal sentiment and thought, shall be included."²²

The mission work begun in the settling of Iowa was nominally continued until 1937. The first decade of the twentieth century marks the end of the really active program, however. In 1901 the Rev. W. P. Payne advocated employing a State Superintendent. He felt it should be "a young active man; a good ready preacher; a good singer; an organizer and one ample in tact." He should have a home parish for one fourth his time and aid from the State

²¹

Ibid., Vol. 3, p. 414.

²²

Ibid., Vol. 4, p. 59.

Convention and the General Convention.²³

The Rev. J. B. Fosher was chosen as the State Superintendent that year. Beginning in 1902 the states of Minnesota, Wisconsin and Iowa each contributed five-hundred dollars to support a Superintendent, Dr. W. H. McGlauflin.²⁴ The formation of circuits was endorsed by the Convention in 1905, when they commended Dr. McGlauflin for his splendid work in promoting and organizing the cause of Universalism in Iowa.²⁵ Two years later the Tri-State Superintendent resigned to accept the Superintendency for the General Convention.²⁶ The Tri-State Messenger, a periodical, was published by Dr. McGlauflin and his successor the Rev. A. R. Tillinghast. The latter recommended: 1- that a series of meetings be held in all the dormant churches; 2- that each church be asked to make a contribution to the State to encourage the spirit of giving; 3- that the Tri-State Messenger be sent to all our people; 4- that a careful record of all parish conditions be kept and a register of all isolated Universalists be compiled.²⁷ In 1908 he visited fifty towns and preached seventy-five sermons.²⁸

²³ Ibid., Vol. 3, p. 123.

²⁴ Ibid., Vol. 3, p. 135.

²⁵ Ibid., Vol. 3, p. 199.

²⁶ Ibid., Vol. 3, p. 205.

²⁷ Ibid., Vol. 3, p. 212.

²⁸ Ibid., Vol. 3, p. 221.

In 1910 the Rev. Mr. Tillinghast resigned to accept a call to the Universalist church at Pasadena, California. The State Board, upon the recommendation of the General Convention, chose the Rev. T. B. Fisher.²⁹ He urged an increase in the ministry. "It was an able presentation of the difficulties and awards of the ministry as a profession and an eloquent appeal for 'almighty good men'. It was a challenge for consecration on the part of our capable young people to this work."³⁰

Superintendent Fisher, after conferring with the Board decided to open a new mission point. "The project to open work in new places in Iowa should have the hearty support of all our people. We must insist that the missionary spirit is the spirit of life and our efforts to enlarge our borders should be unremitting."³¹ Ft. Dodge, Ottumwa and Mason City were considered. Mason City was chosen. Calls were made and the Rev. Mr. Fisher preached to fairly large audiences.³² At the Convention in 1912 he reported that the mission had proven a failure after a trial of several months.³³ This was the last new mission point that the Universalists attempted to open in this state.

When the Rev. Mr. Fisher resigned in 1913 he expressed a deep appreciation of the friendliness and cooperation

²⁹ Ibid., Vol. 3, p. 304.

³⁰ Ibid., Vol. 3, p. 294.

³¹ Ibid., Vol. 3, p. 287.

³² Ibid., Vol. 3, p. 313.

³³ Ibid., Vol. 3, p. 343.

of the Convention. They recorded their affection for him and their deep gratitude for his work at West Union as well as for his other services.³⁴

The Rev. F. W. Miller accepted the pastorate at Osage and the position as State Superintendent in 1914. He recommended the holding of six weeks of evangelistic meetings where there were dormant parishes, employing some magnetic personality from headquarters and then having the parish call a resident pastor. This plan was carried out at Boone and Mitchellville.³⁵

In 1918 when the Rev. O. G. Colegrove came to Mitchellville³⁶ he also assumed the work of superintending the dormant parishes and the scattered Universalists. He continued in this work and in this parish until 1937. His faithful devotion to the cause he loved is expressed in his final report in Mitchellville. "With this year's work I close my services as State Superintendent. I wish to thank the officers and the people of the churches for their hearty cooperation and hospitality. The friendships formed will remain in sacred remembrance and be cherished in days to come."³⁷

For several years beginning in 1920 the Rev. Luther Riley Robinson was engaged by the General Convention to do

³⁴ Ibid., Vol. 3, pp. 376 and 385.

³⁵ Ibid., Vol. 3, pp. 391 and 428.

³⁶ Ibid., Vol. 3, p. 497.

³⁷ Ibid., Vol. 4, p. 261.

missionary and inspirational work in the Mid-west area.³⁸
 His work in Iowa was invaluable. At some time he served every parish and it was he who led in the reorganization of the church at Waterloo.³⁹

Dr. F. J. Drake as president of the Convention between 1909 and 1911 collected and organized the records of all the scattered Universalists and began the Post Office Mission which was continued by the Secretaries of the Convention. Notable work was done, especially by Herbert L. Stoughton. It consisted of getting in touch with the isolated Universalists, sending them denominational literature, giving them an opportunity to join a church organization, and to contribute financially to the denomination.

In 1911 there were three hundred eleven names on the mailing list, sixty-three others were by these efforts affiliated with some Iowa Universalist Church; two thousand five hundred twenty-eight sermons were mailed; seven hundred fifty convention notices and one hundred fifty programs of the Convention were sent to Iowa newspapers. The total cost was fifty dollars.⁴⁰ In 1913 four thousand five hundred sermons were mailed. The yearly expense account was one hundred twenty-one dollars,⁴¹ which was largely postal and printing expenses. The previous year they had made connection

³⁸ Ibid., Vol. 3, p. 560.

³⁹ Ibid., Vol. 4, p. 580.

⁴⁰ Ibid., Vol. 3, p. 313.

⁴¹ Ibid., Vol. 3, p. 369.

with three hundred ninety-two isolated Universalist families.⁴² In 1917 they sent out six thousand one hundred sixty sermons as well as Easter greetings and individual letters.⁴³ This enterprise was organized and supported enthusiastically because it was another avenue for a type of missionary service to scattered Universalists and other liberals in the state. By 1920 the volume of literature distributed had declined materially; only four hundred twelve copies of sermons were mailed.⁴⁴ Thereafter the amount was never large. The Rev. O. G. Colegrove continued the program on a small scale until he moved to Illinois in 1937.

Year after year religious education was emphasized as the medium through which the coming generations would be trained to meet the problems of their time. Both the young people and the church school teachers were urged to attend the Institutes in nearby states such as at Lombard College in Illinois, Turkey Run in Indiana, and the Unitarian Young Peoples Conferences at Humboldt and McGregor. In a modest financial way the Convention assisted individuals who attended.

Dr. Laura Bowman Galer, a nationally recognized religious education expert, has taught in many of these institutes and conferences, planned the curricula, and been dean for some of them. For a long time she wrote the weekly

⁴²

Ibid., Vol. 3, p. 332.

⁴³

Ibid., Vol. 3, p. 490.

⁴⁴

Ibid., Vol. 3, p. 565.

lesson guides for the Church School published by the denomination as The Helper. She was invited often to share in the Unitarian as well as the Universalist educational programs.

During the first third of this century the presidents of Lombard College, Dr. L. B. Fisher, Dr. C. Ellwood Nash, and Dr. Joseph Tilden came to the annual sessions to advertise the college and to give inspirational addresses. The Convention elected each year one or two representatives to visit this school in Galesburg, Illinois. In 1920 fifty dollars was pledged toward the expenses of any Iowa student attending this school and a year later the pledge was raised to one hundred for an Iowan. Dr. Tilden was empowered to choose the individual.⁴⁵ In 1923 one hundred dollars was voted to the institution⁴⁶ and three years later two thousand dollars was sent when Dr. Tilden had raised two hundred fifty thousand dollars for an endowment fund.⁴⁷ Many of the Universalist young people from this state did attend Lombard College; it was there a large number of the ministers for Iowa were trained, among them Dr. Effie McCollum Jones, Rev. B. M. Jones, Rev. O. G. Colegrove, Dr. Laura Bowman Galer, Rev. Jennie Bartholomew Hitchcock, Rev. H. L. F. Gillespie, and Dr. Amos Crum. In an earlier day Dr. William Chamberlin

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Ibid., Vol. 3, p. 583.

⁴⁶

Ibid., Vol. 4, p. 22.

⁴⁷

Ibid., Vol. 4, p. 49.

gave ten thousand dollars⁴⁸ and A. G. Throop presented twenty thousand dollars to the divinity school.⁴⁹

Dr. F. J. Drake served Lombard College as Field Secretary for a few years following 1912.⁵⁰ In 1929 this Universalist College succumbed to the fate of many inadequately endowed educational institutions. It had served the sons and daughters of Iowa and been in turn supported by students and adults from Iowa. Such prominent Iowa Universalists as Hon. R. S. Galer, Dr. Laura Bowman Galer, J. B. Harsh, O. B. Ayers, Dr. Amos Crum, Hamilton S. Karr, George W. Wakefield, and Dr. Effie McCollum Jones served on its Board of Trustees.

Sometime in the first decade of the century the Young Peoples Christian Union ceased to have a separate convention and shared the state church meeting. Herbert L. Stoughton, in writing to Dr. Effie McCollum Jones in 1908, expressed himself on the change.

"I remember well the scrap in the Y. P. C. U. Convention when it was first voted to hold their session at the same time and place as the State Convention. I fought it from every side, but lost. Then we were having annual conventions with frequently double the attendance of the State Convention. In the first meeting held with the State Convention, the attendance at the two did not equal the young people's [attendance in the separate meetings.] Then they were given one day, later half a day and so on [in 1907 none]. I hardly think

⁴⁸M. L. Edwards, "Career of a Remarkable Man" - Aug. 9, 1884 - newspaper clipping taken from a Mt. Pleasant newspaper.

⁴⁹Universalist Register (Boston), 1911.

⁵⁰I.U.C., Secretary's Record, Vol. 3, p. 346.

there are more than two live senior unions in the state."⁵¹

Doubtless there were other causes that affected the attendance at Conventions and the number of unions in the state. The situation fluctuated somewhat with the numbers of young people in the individual parishes at a given time. In the last twenty years the number has varied for that reason. Sometimes as many as thirty would be in attendance and then as few as eight or ten - but they have been given responsibility, recognition, and social opportunities by the adult delegates and officers.

To carry on the state missionary and convention activities has necessitated the use of money. Beginning in 1909 they began the practise of subsidizing a weak or dormant parish to enable it to remain or to become an actively functioning church;⁵² or to repair their church property for services. This was an added burden. Neither the cent-a-day per member plan, the pledge plan, the parish quota plan, nor a special drive for the raising of an endowment ever met with marked success. Their people were, perhaps, too strongly individualistic to respond well to any of these plans. The independent congregational organization made it possible to ask but impossible to command cooperation. Furthermore, the local parish finances were more compelling because nearer to each member.

⁵¹ Herbert L. Stoughton, Osage, Iowa, to Dr. Effie McCollum Jones, August 17, 1908.

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I.U.C., Secretary's Record, Vol. 3, p. 238.

Some funds came into the permanent treasury through the sale of the church properties where the society had been dormant for a considerable time. Also a few individuals had made modest bequests, namely J. D. Platt, Mrs. Nancy and Mr. Nathan Peckham, E. P. Sinclair, Mary K. Lancey, Mrs. Mary L. Pingrey and Mrs. M. E. Smith. The one thousand dollar Nancy Peckham fund for ministerial relief was sent to the Ministerial Pension Fund of the General Convention.⁵³ Unfortunately, some unwise investments and the world economic depression depleted the modest reserve.

During the twentieth century there were some changes in the declaration of faith that affected Iowa, a part of the general denomination. There have been a number of such revisions which were generally accepted as evidences of progress in religious thought. A denominational leader in writing about creeds said the

"problem... is to unite freedom with order, liberality with stability, growth with permanency. If there be any among us who, in their anxiety for freedom, object to creeds or Professions of Belief, from fear that spiritual life will thereby be checked, they should be reminded that Faith is the condition of standing or falling of every Christian Church, and that creeds are not only safe, as long as they are subject to periodical revision, but they are salutary, nay even necessary, as landmarks of growth and progress, necessary as a bond of union, fellowship and co-operation among large bodies of men."⁵⁴

The new set of Five Principles adopted at Boston in 1899 in response to a wide demand for the renewal of the liberty clause which had been inadvertently omitted, continued

⁵³ Ibid., Vol. 4, p. 112.

⁵⁴ Universalist Register and Almanac, Boston, 1874.

to be the statement of faith until the Washington convention in 1935. These changes in profession were a healthy sign of a living, growing institution. In every one there has been the idea of the continuous faith in the love of God for all of his children and their salvation and they have combined

"the proclamation of convictions with insistence on the right of intellectual and spiritual freedom. -- The Universalist faith was born out of a struggle for spiritual freedom and in the spirit of freedom only can it live. Its genius is summed up in the Motto: 'In essentials, unity; in non-essentials, liberty; in all things charity.'"⁵⁵

The Five Principles for more than thirty years were before the physical eye, on the walls of the churches in Webster City and Mitchellville and were frequently heard in the simple liturgy opening the hour of worship.

The Worcester Statement and the Bond of Fellowship ratified at Washington state that,

"The bond of fellowship in this Convention shall be a common purpose to do the will of God as Jesus revealed it and to co-operate in establishing the Kingdom for which he lived and died.

"To that end we avow our faith in God as Eternal and All-Conquering Love, in the spiritual leadership of Jesus, in the supreme worth of every human personality, in the authority of truth known or to be known, and in the power of men of good will and sacrificial spirit to overcome all evil and progressively establish the kingdom of God. Neither this nor any other statement shall be imposed as a creedal test, provided that the faith thus indicated be professed."⁵⁶

The general trend of the pulpit leadership may be

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Frederic Williams Perkins, Beliefs Commonly Held Among Us, Boston, 1940, pp. 53 and 54.

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Perkins, op. cit., pp. 3,4.

indicated by the records of the addresses at the annual state meetings. The challenge and inspiration of the pioneer Universalists in Iowa who stood unswervingly for democracy, reason and truth in religion was presented one year by Dr. Clinton Lee Scott, urging the members to be a thinking group courageously defending their convictions "for a thinking minority can exert a tremendous influence upon the progress of the world."⁵⁷ The Rev. C. H. Olson at another time, told the assembled delegates that no program was ready made for any church school or parish for "our strength is in the fact that we are a religious democracy, with the glorious opportunity of being able to change and grow as we see the need."⁵⁸

Dr. Effie McCollum Jones once said,

"The road to achievement has never been easy but it leads upward. Our greatest human quality is the ability to hold on in spite of defeat. The law of progress is dependable but not automatic. So great men are able to hope greatly and keep their eyes on a goal toward which the ages will permit them to struggle."⁵⁹

In 1919 the Convention inscribed the following in its permanent records.

"In this time of re-organization and re-building of every phase of human society we plead for a keener realization of the vital need of the world for our peculiar message of human brotherhood and hope for all the race. The world must be brought to see more clearly the fundamental necessity for right ideals as the only feasible basis for any valid and lasting settlement of the crucial problems which confront civilization. In full confidence that as our beloved Dr. Fisher said so strongly last night we owe to the world in its present crying need and peril a strong and confident affirmation of our essential principles of

⁵⁷I. U. C., Secretary's Records, Vol. 4, p. 133.

⁵⁸Ibid., Vol. 5, p. 23.

⁵⁹Ibid., Vol. 4, p. 321.

human brotherhood and the integrity of the divine order. It is necessary now as never before that we shall keep our churches active, up to their fullest degree of efficiency and speaking their message in no uncertain voice. While we welcome every effort for a more cordial cooperation among the denominations and a closer fellowship among Christians of every sect, we still need to remind ourselves and the world that the fearless proclamation of our peculiar tenets has been a major factor in mellowing theological differences and in popularizing the ideals of human solidarity and social service to which we now look in hope, and that unless we keep our special flag flying and make our peculiar emphasis in no uncertain tongue we shall fail the world when it needs us most."⁶⁰

In 1940 Dr. Laura Bowman Galer in the Occasional Sermon entitled "Hold Your Ground" was reported to have said

"that no matter what you hear this is not the world's greatest crisis. Scientific discoveries simply aid us to know what is going on. History reveals that scourges and persecutions have been worse in the past ages. If they came thru we can come thru. The terrible temptation of the times is in the mind. Think clearly for what you stand and then stand for it before all men unafraid. You may perish but the things for which you bravely stood before all men will live on. Jesus of Nazareth had the choice of silence or death, he chose to armor himself with the truth and accept the judgment. Doubtless that is why the things for which He stood have lived through the ages. Our faith cannot be killed but it will die if we do not boldly defend it before all the world."⁶¹

Dr. Ratoliff said,

"We need to ask often, what does count in life? This church has always stressed as the great eternal law of life the law of love. It is our distinct contribution to the world of ideas. It is the basic law of living. To fit this great law into our every day living and make it operate is this church's job. The goal of human endeavor is brotherhood. Torn by war and with a world in chaos this is the sort of religion that must be preached as never before. Our weakness is that we are given to dwell on memories, to looking backward. Memories can be an inspiration or a burden."⁶²

⁶⁰Ibid., Vol. 3, p. 535.

⁶¹Ibid., Vol. 5, p. 37.

⁶²Ibid., Vol. 5, p. 56, (1940).

Dr. Jones, like Dr. Galer, supplied inspiration and armor for the war era. She read the fourth verse of the sixty-first chapter of Isaiah.

"There is perhaps no better example of desolation, of complete devastation than is given in this story of destruction and woe that came upon the Hebrew race....Because we need a heartening voice in these times these lines from the records of the Hebrews are read to re-incarnate our faith....No generation has ever been so desolated that it has not risen. Humanity has never surrendered hope. It has climbed a long way up from the tooth and claw era, step by step, this process we call civilization has evolved orderly processes of justice and mercy. Individuals may weaken and fall but humans as a group are never wholly beaten. The spirit of defeatism must be guarded against. Remember that Good can never be permanently defeated. Wisdom never began and ended with one generation. We are the product of all the yesterdays. No situation is ever desperate. To forget vain regrets is a forward step. To dare to go forward to an unknown task, to face a challenge seemingly impossible, to hope in a war torn world, that is our job and our responsibility."⁶³

Dr. Walter McPherson from Joliet, Illinois spoke on a "Faith for These Times", "only those who believe profoundly in a real brotherhood of all men can help to save civilization from its present perils and serve the future's needs."⁶⁴

Alfred S. Cole wrote of the future in 1937. Instead of theological fears concerning sin, punishment and salvation there were now the vital economic and social problems of enabling millions to live in security and comfort.

"Now in a world of political, economic and religious upheaval we stand. The tools used by our fathers, which were admirable in their day, are dull and blunt. With our tradition of freedom, our background of tolerance, with our ability to learn from mistakes, we

⁶³Ibid., Vol. 5, p. 95, (1941).

⁶⁴Ibid., Vol. 4, p. 222.

must stand once again at the front of the struggle. There were times, many of them, when we as a Church faltered. No way could be seen to open ahead. The road was dark....but we went on. That is what we must do now. Armed with the [results of] science, [with a] broad understanding of the world, and [with] good will, we cannot ignore the desperate needs of men and women. Our struggle will be in the economic arena whereas our fathers fought mainly along theological fronts. Let us go on and forge on the anvil of this age a new Liberalism."⁶⁵

The work of the State organization was carried forward with zeal and devotion by the men and women of Iowa. To name them all would be impossible - but some of those who made outstanding contributions came from both the ministry and the laity. Dr. F. J. Drake of Webster City led in the movement to liquidate the assets of the dormant parishes and organize the records so that the president and secretary would have access to the summary placed in notebook form. It is at present the only record of the first half century of the Universalist movement in Iowa.

Herbert L. Stoughton, an attorney from Osage, whose family had long been identified with the denomination was the outstanding secretary. He was so whole-heartedly devoted to the cause that he gave unstintedly of his time, energy, money and talent to the local parish and to the State organization. He was the legal adviser and counsellor during the reorganization. His correspondence files for the denomination were extensive. He responded promptly and in warm good fellowship to all scattered Universalists and inquiring individuals. He assumed the heavy burdens of organizing and supporting the

⁶⁵Cole, loc. cit., p. 1357

Post Office Mission work. The Convention in 1913 passed the following resolution:

"Realizing how much of the work of this Convention has come through the hand of our Secretary, how largely his efficient business methods have added to the activity of the Universalist Church in Iowa and how valuable his devoted service is to this Convention, be it resolved that this Convention express its gratitude to Mr. Herbert L. Stoughton for the work he has already accomplished as Secretary of this Convention."⁶⁶

His untimely death was keenly felt by his many friends and admirers throughout the state.

S. J. Oldfield of Mitchellville was an unusually fine financial agent of the State Convention. A man of unquestioned integrity and reliability he helped by wise counsel, careful records, and sound investments to conserve their funds in order to perpetuate the work of the denomination in Iowa. In the Convention in 1905 an "especial mention was made of Treasurer Oldfield and the hearty vote of the Convention expressed the confidence and satisfaction universally felt in his administration of his office."⁶⁷ He and Dr. Drake helped initiate and pass a law through the Iowa Assembly providing "for the control and disposition of the property of extinct religious societies in this State."⁶⁸

Judge Roger S. Galer of Mt. Pleasant was one of the best presidents the State Convention had in the twentieth century. His calm, deliberate and sagacious counsel was greatly respected and much appreciated. He served as a

⁶⁶I. U. C., Secretary's Record, Vol. 3, p. 384.

⁶⁷Ibid., Vol. 3, p. 188.

⁶⁸Dr. F. J. Drake's report to the Executive Board of I. U. C., January 26, 1911.

trustee of Lombard College and was on the Executive Board of the General Convention. His worth and devotion received wide recognition.

Judge F. C. Platt and H. B. Cropper, both of Waterloo, gave efficient and faithful leadership as State President in the early part of the century. C. D. Van Vechten and C. N. Jenkins, attorneys from Cedar Rapids, served on the official board; either one or the other served continuously until that parish withdrew from the convention. Mrs. O. S. Franklin, Des Moines, as secretary, Richard Shane, Waterloo, as treasurer and later as president, have given unusually fine service to the state organization.

L. V. Harpel, an attorney from Boone, was for many years elected to the State Board. After his death in 1936 the records carry this memorial to his life.

"In the death of L. V. Harpel of Boone the Iowa Universalist Convention has met with a deep loss and registers its sincere appreciation of his fine personality, his sterling integrity and his innate liberalism. For many years he was active in our church in Boone and a loyal supporter of the work of this Convention. For several years he was our capable and hard working President. We need more men of his loyal and incorruptible spirit. His life has been a challenge to the young men of today to be to their church in their age what Mr. Harpel and his like have been in their time."⁶⁹

The ministers whose leadership has been most permanent were those with unusual ability, a long tenure and a deep devotion to the cause. Among them there has been a number of women whose service in Iowa has been very outstanding and recognized through out the denomination, namely Dr.

⁶⁹I. U. C., Secretary's Record, Vol. 4, p. 225. (1936)

Laura B. Galer, Dr. Effie McCollum Jones, the Rev. Jennie B. Hitchcock, the Rev. Edna P. Bruner and the Rev. Minnie O. Colegrove.

The
 ^Rev. Jennie Bartholomew came to Iowa after she had taught school for a number of years and then had graduated from Byder Divinity School at Lombard College. She served the parishes of Mitchellville, Boone and Osage. At the latter place she married Arad Hitchcock and she has resided there ever since. She gave up the active ministry but remained a loyal and devoted worker in the denomination in Osage and in the state. In 1937^{when} the Rev. Jennie Hitchcock was seriously ill, the Convention in session wrote,

"We....desire to express our sincere appreciation of Mrs. Hitchcock's fine qualities and her loyal devotion to the faith and to the interests of her church. She loved her privilege as a member and as a minister of the Universalist Church. Even since her failing health has made it inadvisable for her to carry on her active services as a minister she has maintained her constant attitude of loyal cooperation in all ways....we are each her debtors for the inspiration of her fine spirit. Our prayers and good wishes are with her for her rapid return to a fair measure of health and enjoyment of life."⁷⁰

"Fifty years in the ministry have given Dr. Effie McCollum Jones a life of variety and enjoyment. Dr. Jones has traveled from coast to coast, from border to border, and through Canada and much of Europe during those fifty years. She has worked for prohibition, as well as for woman suffrage, the welfare of under-privileged children, world peace and other causes which she felt would benefit mankind. 'My life has been full, rich and happy, and I suppose that is because my hobby is people,' Dr. Jones said.

"[She] will celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of her ordination as a Universalist minister Sunday [June 1942]. She has been pastor of the Universalist

⁷⁰ Ibid., Vol. 4, p. 259.

church in Webster City since 1925 and during that time has been a leader in many activities for community betterment and a leading lecturer. Her entire ministry has been spent in three cities.... Barre, Vermont, Waterloo and Webster City, Iowa.

"She first decided to become a minister when, at the age of ten she learned that Universalist Churches sometimes, though rarely in those days, employed women as pastors. From the day of that discovery, she never lost sight of her aim...the pulpit of a church. When she was little more than fifteen years old, she became a district school teacher in Kansas, her home state. She entered Ryder Divinity school at Galesburg, Illinois, at nineteen years of age. She was ordained at Dubuque, Iowa, June 28, 1892.

"Immediately after her ordination she became the wife of a theological classmate, B. Wallace Jones. The Rev. and Mrs. Jones came to Waterloo, where they were co-pastors of the Universalist church. 'My husband delivered the morning sermon and I preached at the evening service. We both taught Bible classes and had a very happy pastorate in Waterloo,' she said. In less than two years after their ordination Mr. and Mrs. Jones were called to a larger church in Barre, Vermont. Two children, Eleanor and Benona, were born to them in Barre. Mr. Jones died in January of 1898, and Mrs. Jones was asked to stay on as sole pastor.

"She remained in Barre until 1904 when she was called back to Waterloo, where she stayed until 1916. At that time she resigned to work with the National Woman Suffrage Association as a National Field Director. She toured the country helping to organize and carry out campaigns for votes for women. She is a close friend of Mrs. Carrie Chapman Catt, famous leader of this movement. During her pastorate in Waterloo, Dr. Jones went to Europe in 1910 to address the International Congress of Religious Liberals in Berlin, a convention of outstanding religious leaders from all parts of the world. She also spoke in London, Liverpool, and other European cities.

"Dr. Jones first came to Webster City in 1917, to take over the work of the Rev. Harry F. Shook until he could return from his duties as chaplain in the army during World War I. After two years Mr. Shook again took over his ministry here and Dr. Jones became a lecturer with her sister, Harriet McCollum. In 1925 she returned to the local pastorate and has been here since that time.

"Dr. Jones has, at different times, held most of the state offices in the Universalist church and is now vice president of the Iowa Universalist Convention and its historian. Trustee of the Universalist General Convention for six years, chairman of its standing committee on Pastoral Psychology, she has attended conventions and board meetings in all parts of the United States.

"She has been active in the work of the local Woman's Club and of the Iowa Federation of Women's clubs for many years. She is a member of the Webster City chapter of the Business and Professional Women's Club, of the P. E. O. Sisterhood, and of the League of Women Voters.

"For many years I enjoyed all the traveling experiences that came my way, but now I prefer to settle down in a town like Webster City where I may know people well and enjoy my friends,' she said. 'Don't forget, however, that I think travel is a broadening experience and that every young person should plan to see as much as possible of the world and the ways of many sorts of people before establishing himself for life. Tolerance and understanding come only from acquaintance with all kinds of people.'"⁷¹

Although Dr. Laura Bowman Galer was born in Carroll, Iowa, she grew up in Boston, Massachusetts. She attended Mt. Holyoke College for two years then came west to Cedar Falls to live with her grandfather, Elder John Bowman, once the Superintendent of the Waterloo Methodist Episcopal District. She completed her college work at the Iowa State Normal School, while assisting her grandfather by doing his clerical work, since he had become blind. After obtaining an A. B. degree from Radcliffe College in 1904, where she was a member of Phi Beta Kappa, she taught school in the Cedar Falls public schools and in the Training Department in the Iowa State Normal School.

⁷¹Webster City Observer, June 25, 1942.

In 1896 she joined the Unitarian Church in Boston although her own family was Episcopalian. During the time she was teaching in Cedar Falls she became interested in the Waterloo Universalist Church of which Dr. Effie McCollum Jones was pastor. Because she understood and desired to be helpful to her students in solving their personal problems, she decided to become a minister. The Unitarian Association was not encouraging women to enter their ministry, although they had several occupying pulpits. Dr. L. B. Fisher of Lombard College offered her a faculty position with time to study in the Ryder Divinity School. In 1909 she transferred her membership to the Universalist Church in Waterloo.

While studying at Ryder she was pastor of a new Universalist society at Abingdon, Illinois. In 1911, the year she graduated, she became the pastor at Markesan, Wisconsin. A year later she married Roger S. Galer and came to Mt. Pleasant, opened a Sunday School and did unofficial pastoral work. In 1922 she began preaching between the visits of the pastor from Galesburg, and filled pulpits in Mitchellville, Webster City, Iowa City and Keokuk. Since 1930 she has been the regular pastor in Mt. Pleasant. That church has been very fortunate in the enjoyment of her inspirational leadership for such a long time.

In 1940 she received the Doctor of Divinity degree from Meadville Theological School in recognition of her fine work in the field of religious education. From 1921^{to 19}23 she was vice president of the General Sunday School Association

and has been vice president, trustee, a member and later chairman of the fellowship committee of the State Convention for many years.⁷²

Mrs. Galer wrote Bible for Modern Minds with the assistance of her husband, R. S. Galer and Dr. Floyd Ross of Iowa Wesleyan College.

She is an unusual woman, with warm humanity permeating all her personal contacts and the rare ability to challenge others to think and serve. The Mt. Pleasant Church and the state of Iowa have been enriched by her intelligent and alert leadership.

"In 1930, the Universalist Church of Waterloo welcomed a new minister, Rev. Edna P. Bruner, who there started her ministry after having completed her theological training at St. Lawrence University, Canton, New York.

"She was young and she brought a kind of inspiration that only youth can bring. Her untiring efforts coupled with her devotion did much to build the church as a whole and to fill a definite place in the community life of Waterloo. She served as a public speaker on the platform or over the radio. She endeared herself to the older members of the parish but her work with young people was especially noteworthy. It was under her leadership and inspiration that Robert Housden of Waterloo decided to enter the ministry and enrolled at St. Lawrence University for his training. It was regrettable indeed that his death occurred while he was still a student.

"In connection with her work with young people, Miss Bruner encouraged attendance at the Mid-West Institute as a worth while part of Universalist training. Response to her efforts was splendid and a goodly number from Waterloo always journeyed to Indiana and enrolled for the Mid-West courses. For three years during this period, Miss Bruner served as dean of the Institute.

⁷²Laura Bowman Galer, Mt. Pleasant, Iowa, to Elva Tucker, Waterloo, Iowa, January 14, 1944.

"She served the Iowa Universalist Convention several years as its president. She resigned from this office as well as the Waterloo pastorate in 1940, feeling that she could serve with greater usefulness and gain a still broader experience as a General Field Worker for the Universalist Churches of America with headquarters in Boston.

"Much might be written about what Miss Bruner accomplished in Waterloo but the many lives that are richer because they caught the vision of her teachings and responded to them, are the true measuring stick of her great worth to Waterloo and to Iowa."⁷³

The Rev. Minnie O. Colegrove's contribution was a joint one of dedication and devotion with her husband, the Rev. O. G. Colegrove. She was ordained while they were serving the parish at Mitchellville, Iowa. They were called there in 1918 from Owatonna, Minnesota and Mr. Colegrove became the State Superintendent of Churches.

The latter was born in Michigan, October 30, 1864 and was graduated from the Hanover High School in 1883 and from Ryder Divinity School at Lombard College, Galesburg, Illinois in 1887. He was ordained at Decatur, Michigan, in September. In 1888 he became the pastor at Morrison, Illinois, where he remained for three years.

"December 23, 1891 he was married to Minnie Ogsbury, a school teacher, from Morrison. They held pastorates in Ohio at Kent, Blanchester, Woodstock, Plain City and Greenville. They lived in Ohio twenty-five years and for twelve years he was State Superintendent of the Ohio Churches. They were the pastors at Owatonna, Minnesota for three years, at Mitchellville, Iowa nearly twenty years and at Stockton, Illinois nearly three years.

"He retired from the active ministry in 1941 after fifty-six years in continuous service in Universalist churches. They secured a quiet little

⁷³Mrs. Elizabeth Kenney, McAllen, Texas to Elva Tucker, Waterloo, Iowa, Feb. 12, 1944.

home in Stockton, Illinois where they expect to enjoy their remaining days, still ministering to the causes that need help, for human welfare, universal brotherhood and permanent peace."⁷⁴

They were beloved by all who knew them because of their deep devotion to their church and to the right and their own exemplary lives. They had unbounded faith in and love for their fellowman. Furthermore, they were tolerant of other people who were sincere in their convictions or trying to live aright, though not sharing their views.

Among the other men in the ministry who served in the Iowa Universalist churches, were the Rev. W. S. Ralph of Osage, the Rev. Frank Miller, the Rev. Otto Raspe, the Rev. H. L. Haywood and the Rev. Joseph Fort Newton. The last two were liberal rather than specifically Universalists. They were both men of unusual intellectual and ministerial talents. Rev. Frank Miller and O. G. Colegrove were not eloquent speakers, but their simple direct words and their eloquent lives of service, devotion and self sacrifice to the cause they loved, were deeply respected and they were endeared to the communities where they served. Rev. Mr. Raspe was the talented and capable minister, who placed the Waterloo parish again on the active list, following a short dormant period which many had feared would be fatal. Rev. Mr. Ralph was considered by the people of Osage, their most cultured and capable pastor. The State Convention missed the leadership of this faithful and enthusiastic Universalist

⁷⁴ Rev. O. G. Colegrove, Stockton, Illinois, to Elva Tucker, Waterloo, Iowa, February 16, 1944.

at the time of his death.*

* (More may be found about the individual pastors by referring to the accounts of the parishes where they served.)

Chapter VII

TWENTIETH CENTURY CHURCHES: 1900-1943

The twentieth century opened with some twenty-nine Universalist churches affiliated with the state convention. Of this number eight were doubtless dormant and possibly one or two more might have been.

<u>Active parishes</u>	<u>Dormant parishes</u>
1. Boone	1. Castalia
2. Bloomfield	2. Cedar Falls
3. Cedar Rapids	3. Charles City
4. Clarinda	4. Dubuque
5. Clinton	5. Eldora
6. Greeley	6. Elkader
7. Marshalltown	7. New Sharon
8. Manchester	8. Ossian
9. Mitchellville	
10. Mount Pleasant	
11. Northwood	
12. Osage	
13. Otranto	
14. Shenandoah	
15. Steamboat Rock	
16. Storm Lake	
17. Strawberry Point	
18. Waterloo	
19. Webster City	
20. West Union	
21. Iowa Falls	1

The closing of long established parishes with church buildings was begun in the sale of the Newton, Oska-loosa, Waverly and Iowa City churches in the nineteenth century and was continued in the twentieth. In many cases it is difficult to know just when the parishes became dormant because many of the records are missing. It is possible however to know when they last sent delegates to a state gathering and when the property was sold since most of the

¹Iowa Universalist Convention, President's Notebook,
(hereafter I. U. C. will signify Iowa Universalist Convention).

deeds were held by the state treasurer. The people in each locality were given every encouragement to retain their property and continue their group activities. In most cases the local Universalists either asked the convention to dispose of it, helped arrange the sale or at least gave their consent to the transaction. Whenever possible it was sold to another denomination so that it would continue to house religious worshipers, the purpose for which it was originally dedicated.

and

Between 1900 A 1910 the six churches at Clarinda, Charles City, Iowa Falls, Marshalltown, Northwood and Ossian were dropped from fellowship and their property sold. In the next decade thirteen more vanished from the rolls. They were:

- | | |
|----------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1. Bloomfield | 7. Greeley |
| 2. Castalia | 8. New Sharon |
| 3. Cedar Falls | 9. Otranto |
| 4. Dubuque | 10. Shenandoah |
| 5. Eldora | 11. Steamboat Rock |
| 6. Elkader | 12. Storm Lake |
| | 13. Strawberry Point ² |

From 1920 to 1930 was a much more encouraging period. The Cedar Rapids church was dropped from the Universalist fellowship because they wishes to be a free church without denominational affiliation. So although lost to this group it continued as an active church and a liberal force in Cedar Rapids. The previous two decades had been a time when the state board, under the leadership of Dr. F. J. Drake, had reorganized affairs and sold the useless or deteriorating

²Ibid.

property of dormant societies. Two churches, Manchester and West Union, which had not been active nor supported a minister for many, many years were finally sold between 1930 and 1940. By 1943 only four churches were active and just two dormant ones yet retained their properties.

Active

1. Mitchellville
2. Mount Pleasant
3. Waterloo
4. Webster City

Dormant

1. Boone
2. Osage³

Churches Closed in First Decade: 1900-1910

The story of the local churches was described in the chronological order of their closing. In many cases not much was known of their declining days. The six that were closed in the first decade were Clarinda, Charles City, Iowa Falls, Marshalltown, Northwood and Ossian.

Clarinda

In 1900 Rev. J. B. Fosher the state superintendent, held a series of meetings in Clarinda; one new member was added, the first one in years.⁴ Early the following year the Rev. H. L. F. Gillespie did some volunteer work in the parish.⁵ Four years later (1905) the church and grounds were sold.⁶ July 17, 1911 Dr. Drake called in the city and found several Universalists, nine of whom became members of the Webster City parish.⁷

³Ibid.

⁴The Clarinda Herald, November 3, and December 4, 1900.

⁵Ibid., Jan. 4, 1901.

⁶I. U. C., Secretarial Record, Vol. 3, p. 213.

⁷Ibid., Vol. 3, p. 311.

Charles City

At Charles City they had become inactive so the building was sold to the First Christian Church January 1, 1907. The Rev. G. A. Hess was their representative. W. H. Griswold who had been responsible for all the care and repairs for the last seven or eight years wrote, "It is with regret that we have to give up our beautiful little churchit would be impossible to start up the church at present, perhaps for a long time to come."⁸ The trustees who decided to dispose of the property were J. Howen, E. J. Fisher, E. D. Bishop, W. H. Griswold, Clayton Henry, and Josiah Bellnip.⁹

Iowa Falls

The church at Iowa Falls came to be called the Peoples' Church. The Rev. John Mullholland, a Universalist minister, remained there until sometime in 1901. Hon. J. H. Funk and other laymen kept the church open for a time.¹⁰ In 1905 it was sold to the Catholic denomination. "The Universalists no longer maintain services and it was deemed best to dispose of the property which will make the Catholic people a fine church home in the heart of the city. The premises are at present occupied by the Episcopalians...."¹¹ The funds received were distributed among the members of the local

⁸W. H. Griswold, Charles City, Iowa to S. J. Oldfield, Mitchellville, Iowa, March 23, 1907.

⁹Ibid.

¹⁰Iowa Falls Sentinel, Feb. 21, 1900 - Dec. 31, 1901.

¹¹Ibid., Feb. 21, 1905.

parish who had contributed to the building project.¹² Mrs. Abbie Foster a member of this church attended the conventions as late as 1913 when she was a member of the resolutions committee.¹³

Marshalltown

Marshalltown was last represented in the convention in 1900. Thereafter the newspapers carried no account of regular services or mentioned a pastor. They had originally obtained their religious home, the stone church, when the Episcopalian group had lost it through foreclosure proceedings. In 1909 the latter group purchased it from the Universalists.¹⁴ James L. Denmead was the treasurer and L. B. Munro was another member of the local society at the time of this transaction.¹⁵

Ossian

The small society at Ossian ceased to function about 1901. The small frame church was sold to a working man who converted it into a dwelling¹⁶ about 1909.¹⁷

Churches Closed in the Second Decade: 1910-1920

In the following decade (1910-1920) a much larger

¹²Frank Foster, Iowa Falls, Iowa to Elva Tucker, Cedar Falls, Iowa, April 8, 1943.

¹³I. U. C., Secretary's Record, Vol. 3, p. 385.

¹⁴Iowa Times Republican (Marshalltown), Jan. 22, 1909.

¹⁵S. J. Oldfield and H. L. Stoughton correspondence, and notation files, (John S. Coburn to S. J. Oldfield, Jan. 16, 1909).

¹⁶Mrs. Ward M. Allen, Ossian, Iowa to Elva Tucker, Cedar Falls, Iowa, May 16, 1943.

¹⁷I. U. C., President's Notebook.

group was dropped and many of these had a longer history and made a greater contribution to the lives of the people in their respective communities.

Bloomfield
Castalia
Cedar Falls
Dubuque
Eldora
Elkader
Greeley

New Sharon
Otranto
Shenandoah
Steamboat Rock
Storm Lake
Strawberry Point

Bloomfield

Bloomfield had entertained the state convention in 1897¹⁸ and they were last represented in the convention in 1904.¹⁹ At that time there were thirty members. Dr. McGlaufflin had been there and in 1912 the Rev. T. B. Fisher held services with forty or fifty in attendance. There seemed considerable interest and he recommended that they form a circuit with Mt. Pleasant and hold services once each month.²⁰ The "Nazarenes" were renting their church for sixty dollars a year. The following year the church was sold to the above renters through their minister, Dr. C. H. Cronk.²¹ Mrs. Flora McAchran wrote, "The Membership grew for some years but was finally so diminished by death and removal that the Society ceased to function and the building was sold."²² Nevertheless, they had thirty or forty members and that would seem

¹⁸Effie McCollum Jones, D.D., Brief History of the First Universalist Church of Bloomfield, Iowa., manuscript.

¹⁹I. U. C., Secretary's Record, Vol. 3, p. 258.

²⁰Ibid., Vol. 3, p. 328.

²¹I. U. C., President's Notebook.

²²Mrs. Flora D. McAchran, Bloomfield, Iowa to Dr. Effie McCollum Jones, Webster City, Iowa, July 9, 1930.

enough to support a church, especially one that had gallantly defended itself in the days of the religious debates.

Castalia

Castalia was last represented in the Convention in 1896. This was a rural church which Dr. Effie McCollum Jones has said was primarily a family Chapel -- because the Nathan Peckhams had built it and maintained it. Mr. Peckham passed away in 1899 and his wife a decade later. In 1911 there was no organization and just three families were identified with the Universalist church. A year later the building was sold to the German Lutheran Congregation and the "burying ground" was deeded to the Bloomfield Cemetery Association in compliance with the desire of the Peckhams.²³

Cedar Falls

Cedar Falls was last represented in the convention the same year as Castalia. In 1911 there were three families but they still had an organization. The officers were S. A. Bishop, Moderator; F. D. Pierce (once a minister but then in business); secretary, H. S. Gilkey; and treasurer, Herbert Godfrey. The property was in excellent repair and rented for fifteen dollars a month. January 9, 1915 it was sold.²⁴ Only Mrs. F. D. Pierce, S. A. Bishop's daughter; Herbert Godfrey; Miss May Foote and H. S. Gilkey still reside in the community.²⁵

²³I. U. C., President's Notebook and I. U. C., Secretary's Record, Vol. 3, p. 329.

²⁴I. U. C., President's Notebook and Secretary's Record, Vol., 3, p. 428.

²⁵Conversation with Mrs. F. D. Pierce, Cedar Falls, Iowa in 1943.

Dubuque

Dubuque, so prosperous in the nineteenth century, was last represented in the convention in 1896.²⁶ By 1901 it was classified as a Peoples' Church with the Rev. N. A. Haskell, a Unitarian minister, as their pastor. A few years before they had sold their property and planned to build in a more favorable site, but this was never done. From 1890 to 1908 they held regular business meetings.

"In 1902 the Society was re-incorporated. These articles of incorporation were signed by B. W. Jones [father-in-law of Dr. Effie McCollum Jones] James Cushing, Angie B. Road, Mattie L. Hamilton, Emeretta Kingman, Clara Thedinga, and O. E. Guernsey. After 1908 there are again no records until those of 1910. In that year the fifty-second annual meeting of the Society was held at the residence of Dr. C. H. Hamilton. At this meeting the trustees were instructed to sell a lot which the Society owned for not less than three thousand six hundred dollars. This lot was located on the corner of Tenth and Bluff Streets. [It was sold for three thousand eight hundred dollars].²⁷

"No other meetings are recorded until the next annual meeting which was held in Temple Hall, corner of Ninth and Locust Streets, on Friday evening, September 15, 1911. Dr. Drake, president of the State Convention was present. During the meeting the following resolution was read by Henry Michel: 'Whereas, the First Universalist Society of Dubuque, Iowa, although maintaining its legal existence has for a number of years past been inactive and dormant and had held or conducted no religious exercises of any kind, etc.Therefore, be it resolved....that the funds now in the hands of the treasurer be turned over to the Iowa Universalist Convention.'²⁸

At that time there were twenty families and twenty-three members in the society. The officers were Henry Michel,

²⁶I. U. C., President's Notebook.

²⁷Ibid.

²⁸Dr. Effie McCollum Jones, First Universalist Church of Dubuque, Iowa., (hereafter Jones, Dubuque).

president; Miss Clara Thedinga, secretary; and B. W. Jones, treasurer.²⁹ "What reports are available show that during a long period the church was prosperous, its members were very active and interested and exerted considerable influence in the community."³⁰ This meeting would not have recommended the transfer of the funds accumulated if they had not shown in a fifteen year interval that they were not going to use them. After completing the transaction the society apparently ceased to function and never again tried to resume services. Their group had not been hopelessly depleted if numbers are of any significance.

Eldora

Eldora was last represented in the convention in 1899, the last time the aged Father Gowdy could attend. It was he who had kept the church going either by his management or his personal ministrations. By 1909 they were not having services and apparently had not had many except those of the Tri-State Superintendent because the building was rented to the Christian Scientists. Both Mrs. A. S. Ward and Mrs. Dr. Morse, the leading members, wished to resume occasional services. Two years later the city council threatened to condemn the property because the tower was unsafe, several feet of the building rested on an adjoining lot, and a curbing and paving tax assessment of three hundred dollars was overdue. The surviving members voted to sell but all the personal property was reserved to be donated toward the equip-

²⁹I.U.C., President's Notebook.

³⁰Jones, Dubuque, op. cit.

ment of the auditorium of the public library. This included the pulpit, two pulpit chairs, a square marble topped table and twenty seven-seat sections of opera chairs. The Eldora Public Library Board acknowledged the gift by a formal vote of thanks.³¹ Mrs. Dr. Morse is the only surviving Universalist in Eldora today, she has been a member of the denomination for seventy-one years.³²

Elkader

Elkader usually was a part of a circuit including Strawberry Point and Greeley. The Rev. Matt Wing represented them last in 1896 at the convention.³³ Only about five members were reported living around there in 1883. They retained their property until December 24, 1909, and at the 1910 convention the name of this society was stricken from the register.³⁴

Greeley

The last delegation from Greeley to the convention came in 1907. By 1909 the frame church was in very bad repair. The land had been a bequest of H. A. and Elizabeth Correll. The contract by the state convention to A. R. Heath was completed in 1911 when the name of Greeley was dropped as a Universalist parish.³⁵ Miss Ella Ellis wrote in 1930 that

³¹I. U. C., President's Notebook.

³²Mrs. Dr. Morse, Eldora, Iowa to Elva Tucker, Cedar Falls, Iowa, May 12, 1943.

³³I. U. C., Secretary's Record, Vol. 3, p. 49.

³⁴I. U. C., President's Notebook.

³⁵Ibid.

the last pastor was Mrs. Sophronia L. Crum, [probably about 1899.] The only surviving members when she wrote were Mrs. Martha Jenkins, and daughter Ruth, Mrs. T. J. Armstrong, George Parker Sr., Fred Hilsenbeck and Ella E. Ellis.³⁶

New Sharon

The New Sharon parish was last represented in the convention in 1896.³⁷ By 1911 there were two families, no doubt the Ways and Eatons, since George Way was a trustee and N. M. Eaton was the secretary.³⁸ The building was rented to the Independent School District for an annual fee of one hundred dollars.³⁹ In 1914 the property was sold to M. F. and Fay Watland.⁴⁰ And so ended the story of the parish begun as one dedicated to equal religious freedom for all denominations.

Otranto

In the village of Bartlett Grove was a small church designated as the First Universalist Church of Otranto. It was close to Osage and so shared in the expenses and services of the pastor employed in the larger city. They were last represented in the convention in 1900. A year later there were four families and ten members. In 1912 the building was rented to a Ladies Aid Society. By 1914 the decision was

³⁶Ella E. Ellis, Brief History of the Universalist Church at Greeley, Iowa, (manuscript)

³⁷I. U. C., Secretary's Record, Vol. 3, p. 247.

³⁸I. U. C., President's Notebook.

³⁹I. U. C., Secretary's Record, Vol. 3, p. 311.

⁴⁰Ibid., Vol. 3, p. 403.

reached to dispose of the property to Samuel Johnson.⁴¹

Shenandoah

The church at Shenandoah was a gift of the Hayden family, Elizabeth presented a deed to it to the state convention in session at Iowa Falls in 1895.⁴² In 1903 Mary K. Lancy bequeathed one thousand dollars to the convention. The income was to be paid to Shenandoah to defray the expenses of their religious services. In 1910 the officials were Moderator, Mrs. Etta Bryte; Treasurer, Miss Mary Hale; Trustee, A. F. Bailey. A year later they were not having regular services because the church and parsonage were rented; there were eight families, with fourteen members. In 1913 the Rev. T. B. Fisher reported there was just one family, the Reynolds, and they were planning to move to California that summer. The building appeared to be useless so it was sold to the Christian Scientists in 1914 and the parish was dropped from the register. The Hayden Memorial window was removed and sent to Dr. Q. H. Shinn's church in Nashville, Tennessee because the Shenandoah church was the result of his work. Miss Hale and Miss Reynolds were both glad the church could be sold.⁴³

Steamboat Rock

Steamboat Rock was last represented in the annual meeting in 1909. Mrs. J. C. Agan of Marshalltown, Iowa, one

⁴¹I. U. C., President's Notebook.

⁴²I. U. C., Secretary's Record, Vol. 3, p. 37.

⁴³I. U. C., President's Notebook.

of the original organizers of the society, paid the taxes. Henry J. Finster was the caretaker of the building which was located on the corner of his lawn facing the view of the village. It was an eyesore to the community and he insisted that it be removed. The six members of the society living in the town agreed that he could wreck it if he paid to each of the two cemeteries three hundred dollars before January 1910. In good faith he carried out the agreement and the money was soon spent to improve the properties. In 1911 Steamboat Rock was removed from the register.⁴⁴

Storm Lake

In 1901 the Rev. Margaret Titus Olmstead was the pastor at Storm Lake. After that date they had only the occasional services of the Tri-State Superintendent. In 1905 there were two lay delegates in attendance at the state convention. Five years later the trustees were; George Currier, chairman; R. C. Toy, secretary and treasurer; Mrs. C. W. Moore and R. Burnam, trustees. That year their beautiful Gothic church was sold to the Lakeside Presbyterian Church.⁴⁵

Strawberry Point

Strawberry Point had a tiny brick church. Although they did not support a pastor because their membership was so small, they retained their organization. The last time one of their members attended the convention was in 1909. The following year their officers were Moderator, Mrs. E. A.

⁴⁴Ibid.

⁴⁵Ibid.

Blake; Secretary, Mrs. E. Whitmarsh; and Treasurer, Mrs. Mary Wood. The Ladies Aid society was organized as follows: President, Mrs. E. A. Blake; Secretary, Mrs. E. Whitmarsh; and Treasurer, Mrs. E. M. Barnes. There were five families and five members, all elderly ladies. For years they met, read the Universalist Leader, had an annual meeting in September, sent a delegate to the convention and gave whatever their means would allow; occasionally it was only five dollars.⁴⁶ The church was finally sold in 1910 to the Preston and King Lumber Company because there were trespassers and a sidewalk tax to be met.⁴⁷ Mrs. Gertrude Neudeck of Webster City is a granddaughter of one of these valiant old ladies, Mrs. Blake.⁴⁸ Mrs. Mary Flenniken of Strawberry Point writes that her father and mother, Mr. and Mrs. P. M. Pease were never members but that they were very active in the society. Mr. Pease was treasurer of the church for many years and her mother was an officer and helper in the Ladies Society.⁴⁹

Churches Closed in the Third Decade: 1930-1940
Cedar Rapids

The Rev. J. H. Palmer was pastor of the Cedar Rapids church for the first eight years of this century. He

"was followed for a brief period by Mr. Pratt, who returned as supply. At length a young man was selected from five candidates to serve the church. This was Rev. Joseph Fort Newton of the Peoples' Church, Dixon, Illinois. Mr. Newton was called on March 9, 1908, and resigned in April, 1917, to enter upon the pastorate of the City Temple, London, England. Soon after his coming, a tendency began to manifest itself towards

⁴⁶Ibid.

⁴⁷Ibid.

⁴⁸Conversation with Mrs. Neudeck, Webster City, Iowa in 1943.

⁴⁹Mrs. Mary Flenniken, Strawberry Point, Iowa, to Elva Tucker, Cedar Falls, Iowa, May 4, 1943.

the making of a creedless, non-sectarian church. Various names were proposed by which the church should now be called. From among the names, the Central Church and Liberal Christian Church, the latter was chosen. At the same time a new statement of the purpose of the church was written, it being as follows:

"The aim of this society is to cultivate Freedom, Friendship and Fraternity in religion in behalf of all that makes for private nobility and public welfare. Believing that a unity of spirit is better than a uniformity of theology, we welcome to our fellowship everyone who is seeking truth and righteousness, whatever his faith or opinion may be, leaving each one free to think and act for himself. No creed or ritual is imposed as a requisite of membership, but simply a desire to help forward the cause of spiritual culture and the higher life.'

"With the announcement and subsequent publication of this statement of purpose, together with the exceedingly high quality of Mr. Newton's ministry the church began to grow by leaps and bounds."⁵⁰

Dr. Drake wrote while on the State Executive Board

"I was most delighted to be in Cedar Rapids on Sunday and to be able to attend church there. It would do you all good to see that church packed to its limit in attendance and hear the message the Rev. Mr. Newton has for those people."⁵¹

About four years later A. T. Cooper, a prominent member of that church, wrote to H. L. Stoughton, that Dr. Newton had received a call to the City Temple in London, he was trying to make his decision, but Mr. Cooper felt that he would remain to carry on his experiment in a creedless church.

"If Mr. Newton remains it will be imperative that we build greater by far than our present accommodations. The little brick church is crowded day by day....yesterday and at all times for several years we have

⁵⁰W. A. W. Argow, An Historical Sketch of the Peoples Church, 1925 (pamphlet), pp. 8 and 9.

⁵¹Dr. F. J. Drake, Webster City, Iowa, to the Executive Board, March 6, 1912.

carried up every chair from the Sunday School room and stuck them into every aisle and corner of the building and then have turned away many...."⁵²

The Rev. Mr. Argow wrote several years later,

"It is utterly impossible for anyone to describe, measure or estimate the inimitable ministry of Mr. Newton. This is one of the open volumes in the history of Cedar Rapids and of Iowa, of which every citizen knows more than anyone can write. Today Mr. Newton is recognized as one of the twenty-five great preachers in America (1925)."⁵³

"One of the Cedar Rapids papers published his sermons each week during the latter part of his ministry here. The church also published them in pamphlet form and later bound the pamphlets. These sermons were a mine of wealth to me"

wrote Helen L. Burton.⁵⁴

Mr. Newton did accept the call to the City Temple and they had no one to take his place. Finally Rev. Harold B. Drew was called from Morristown, New Jersey. He is reported to have said, "I am a Universalist in belief and a Baptist by church affiliation and above all a Christian."⁵⁵

"With hard work and splendid cooperation, Mr. Drew was able to carry on the work, when at the beginning of his second year, the Flu struck him down. And the old story of 'What shall we do?' was again repeated. After some time Rev. H. E. Gelvin was asked to assume the pastorate which he did very acceptably.

"For many years, there had been growing in this country a movement known as 'the Community Church movement'. The Community church emphasizes identification with the local community instead of [with] a denomination, as of first importance. It is a church of the people, for the people, and by the people. Its bond

⁵²Albert T. Cooper Att'y, Cedar Rapids, Iowa, to Herbert L. Stoughton, Osage, Iowa, Oct. 2, 1916.

⁵³Argow, op. cit., p. 9.

⁵⁴Helen L. Burton, 1340 D. Ave; N.E., Cedar Rapids, Iowa to Elva Tucker, Cedar Falls, Iowa, April 16, 1943.

⁵⁵C. D. Van Vechten, Cedar Rapids, Iowa, to the State Executive Board, May 1, 1917.

of union is not a certain set of theological doctrines, but a union of common quest, of common need, of common aspiration and of common service. A combined quest for the True, Good and Beautiful is more unifying than a union based upon a uniformity of opinion or belief. The latter is utterly impossible in the very nature of the case, and any attempt to base a fellowship upon it is merely subterfuge. On September 7, 1920, the old society was re-incorporated as the Peoples Church, having dissociated itself from the Universalist Fellowship, thus becoming an independent community church. To make this possible the new society purchased the old church building from the Iowa State Universalist Convention to whom the property had been deeded because of financial assistance rendered some time back in 1890-95.⁵⁶

In 1919 at the Convention in Mitchellville C. D. Van Vechten, Mrs. Orr, and Mrs. McClintock requested that they be given the use of the Cedar Rapids property to form a non-denominational church. The Hon. R. S. Galer was appointed to head a committee to investigate how it could legally be done.⁵⁷ The following year at Boone a delegation of thirty-three came to present their request to the delegate assembly. The minutes read,

"A committee from the Cedar Rapids parish was given the floor, and Mr. C. D. Van Vechten of Cedar Rapids, gave the situation at Cedar Rapids, stating that during Dr. Newton's pastorate....the church had grown so that over five hundred members were enrolled, a great many of the new members being former members of Orthodox churches, and that at the present time many of these new members are dissatisfied with [the] present conditions and the majority of the old and new members feel that the church cannot make a success in Cedar Rapids as a 'Universalist Church', but that, if the church could reorganize as an independent church, all members would rally to its standard, many new members could be added and a great success made of the organization.

⁵⁶ Argow, op. cit., p. 10.

⁵⁷ I. U. C., Secretary's Record, Vol. 3, p. 547.

[Mr. Van Vechten stated,] "That the title to the church property was in the name of the convention with a trust deed to the parish, that the parish wished to and had engaged a pastor, who, although still a member of the Presbyterian Church was very liberal in his belief and preaching; that the church was in hearty sympathy with the Universalist Convention and the doctrines and principles for which it stands and that the majority of the Cedar Rapids parish feel that they and the convention are both working for the same end but that the church has come to the convention with a delegation of thirty-three members to show the convention that they are deeply in earnest and to ask that the convention sell to them the property outright at a reasonable figure, so that they may form their contemplated independent organization, but with the intent of closely affiliating with the convention and its various lines of work, even to the extent of employing a Universalist minister, if one to fit the situation may be found later."⁵⁸

Thus at its own request this church left the denominational fellowship. Beginning in the tremendously successful days of Joseph Fort Newton many people were drawn to the church by his charm, intelligence and oratory but they came primarily because they were drawn by his personality. Some remained for a time after his departure but they could be held only if the church did not have a stated profession of faith and so the change seemed very necessary in order to retain some of the gains from their most successful pastorate and to attempt to regain a position of leadership in the community. Their success was based, however, on the ability and personality of one man; while they were unfortunately confident that the size of the congregation was an accurate measure of the success of a church. The only way it could have been held within the denominational fellowship was for the General Convention to send a Universalist minister of unusual

⁵⁸Ibid., Vol. 3, p. 557.

ability to Cedar Rapids as soon as Mr. Newton departed. Perhaps he could, during a comparatively long pastorate, have welded them into a more homogeneous whole. That was not pursuant with the policy of the denomination and they did not have the means to underwrite a local church so heavily. It is now a small church affiliated with the Unitarian denomination.

Between 1930 and 1940 two other churches besides Cedar Rapids that were permanently closed and their properties sold, were Manchester and West Union. Neither one had been really active for a considerable time.

Manchester

The Rev. T. E. Dotter and his wife had resigned the pastorate at Manchester because of ill-health.⁵⁹ In 1900 the church was closed. On January 5th the following year it was reopened and Rev. Mrs. S. L. Crum was called for one year. She remained until September 21, 1902, at a yearly salary of \$500. The officers chosen were, Moderator, Bert Crosier; Secretary, Mrs. Ola Edmunds; Treasurer, Seth Brown; Trustees, Guy Crosier, Mrs. Caro Sabin and Mrs. Mary Stewart. The last two trustees refused to accept the office and Sylvester Toney and Avery Smith were appointed to fill the vacancies.⁶⁰

The Dorcas Society (Ladies Aid) was reorganized at

⁵⁹ First Universalist Church of Manchester, Iowa, Secretary's Record, Vol. 1, p. 30 (hereafter Manchester Church.)

⁶⁰ Ibid., Vol. 1, p. 32.

the home of Mrs. Edmunds with seventeen members and it was quite active as long as Mrs. Crum remained. After each dinner or bazaar (sociables were rare), the ladies met and voted the net proceeds to their pastor. In the latter part of their history they met in the homes where lunch or dinner was served.⁶¹

The Rev. John Palmer and the Rev. F. J. York of Waterloo met with this parish to discuss deeding the church to the convention but no action was taken because there were so few present on account of the bad weather.⁶²

In August 1903, a grove meeting was held in Murray Park at Thorp, a number of people were present from Strawberry Point, Edgewood and Greeley to meet again their Manchester friends. Dr. W. H. McGlaulin preached in the morning and Dr. Effie McCollum Jones addressed the group in the afternoon. "The day was a most enjoyable one in spite of the heavy rain."⁶³

In October, 1904 Rev. Arthur Roberts of Winsor, Illinois preached in Manchester on three Sundays in the month with the view of locating. He refused the call proffered by the trustees because he had already accepted one elsewhere. Dr. McGlaulin was present when the call was extended, indicating that he, as Tri-State Superintendent, had made the preliminary arrangements.⁶⁴

April 23, 1905 on Easter Sunday Hon. Frank Forbes

⁶¹First Universalist Church of Manchester, Iowa, Ladies Aid Society Record Book, Feb. 1901 - Oct. 18, 1905.

⁶²Manchester Church, Vol. 1, p. 35.

⁶³Ibid., Vol. 1, p. 36.

⁶⁴Ibid., Vol. 1, p. 36.

of Northwood held services both morning and evening. In July, Rev. Leon P. Jones of Marsailles, Illinois delivered two excellent sermons but the Trustees never extended him a call. A month later Dr. Effie McCollum Jones of Waterloo was assisted by the Rev. Harry Richardson of Boone in holding a week of meetings "which were much enjoyed and well attended."⁶⁵ But no definite action was taken toward opening an active church.

A year later on September ninth and twenty third, Dr. W. H. McGlauflin held services. A month later the Rev. Eliza Gurtis Overton a former pastor preached one Sunday. In December the Rev. Lewis B. Fisher D.D., president of Lombard College, preached two excellent sermons and made many friends for himself and his college.⁶⁶

For the next five years there were no entries in the parish record. Then on May 21, 1911 a special meeting was called to consider leading the church building to the Jones Mill Grange. They agreed to lease it; and all the parish funds were turned over to Seth Brown, including the Dorcas Aid Society's treasury of \$75.81.⁶⁷ It was again leased by the Convention to the Grange for ten years in 1927.⁶⁸

In 1931 the Manchester Universalist Church was deeded to the Jones Mill Grange and they in turn deeded the Convention the adjoining vacant lot.⁶⁹ In 1936 that was sold

⁶⁵ Ibid., Vol. 1, p. 37.

⁶⁶ Ibid., Vol. 1, pp. 37 and 38.

⁶⁷ Ibid., Vol. 1, pp. 38 and 39, and Ladies Aid Society Record Book, p. 95.

⁶⁸ I.U.C., Secretary's Record, Vol. 4, p. 64.

⁶⁹ I.U.C., Secretary's Record, Vol. 4, p. 92.

to the McCormick Bros. of Manchester.⁷⁰

It seemed that Manchester had sufficient people and many of them were moderately well-to-do and could have supported their church adequately if they had really wanted a Universalist Church. Mr. A. J. Pease said at the Waterloo Convention in 1908, "that though they are not now active Manchester has enough Universalists to have an active church if there was only a leader."⁷¹

West Union

In 1900, Rev. Harriet I. Baker was the pastor at West Union. The young people's society appeared to be unusually prosperous during her ministry. She resigned in October to marry a young attorney. From then until 1908 they were without a pastor. Occasional services were held by the Rev. Frank York and the Rev. A. R. Tillinghast, when acting as Superintendent.⁷² In July 1908 the Rev. Arthur McDavitt accepted a call to Osage and West Union. He was to be in the latter city once a month. The walls and ceiling of the audience room were redecorated for the resumption of services.⁷³

The officers chosen in 1910 were J. W. Ainsworth, Moderator; Harriet E. Fraverd, Clerk; H. A. Fraverd and T. D. Reeder, Custodians.⁷⁴

⁷⁰ Ibid., Vol. 4, p. 211.

⁷¹ Ibid., Vol. 3, p. 219.

⁷² The Argo (West Union), March 7, 1900 - May 13, 1908.

⁷³ Ibid., July 22, 1908 - July 7, 1909.

⁷⁴ Ibid., Jan. 26, 1910.

In 1913 the church was repaired and the people expressed themselves as ready for a pastor half of the time.⁷⁵ That year the Rev. T. B. Fisher, Tri-State Superintendent, had been there once a month, "tending the garden." In September and October Dr. John Archer Gray [a lecturer by profession] preached each Sunday. The interest from the David Bell Trust Fund of \$1500 was available for religious services, and this helped to pay Dr. Gray's salary for the two months.

During that same year (1913) they piped the church for water, installed a fine new heating plant, painted the church, put on a new roof, set out some trees, made other minor improvements and planned to make still more. Superintendent Fisher reported the local conditions were right for the advancement of the faith and that with proper assistance and cooperation they would build up a permanent church. He urged the Convention Board to have some new arrangement ready to put into effect as soon as Dr. Gray left.⁷⁶ He was commissioned to find a suitable man, who would take the Superintendency and the West Union pastorate, which he was unable to do.⁷⁷

The following year Dr. Gray preached in West Union again for ^{the} two months of September and October, and the people seemed to feel unable to do more.⁷⁸ In 1915 they were pastorless but improved the lot and erected a chimney on the church.⁷⁹

⁷⁵ I.U.C., Secretary's Record, Vol. 3, p. 369.

⁷⁶ Ibid., Vol. 3, p. 376.

⁷⁷ Ibid., Vol. 3, p. 389.

⁷⁸ Ibid., Vol. 3, p. 407.

⁷⁹ Ibid., Vol. 3, p. 429.

The next year the Superintendent used the available funds to correct the roof problems and pay the paving taxes.⁸⁰ Mr. J. W. Ainsworth, a prosperous attorney and a member of the church, wrote to H. L. Stoughton, "The church society here is approaching a condition that is more than dormant, and under present conditions we have absolutely no prospect of being able to interest enough people to make it possible to have services." He reported there were eight families in 1912 with eleven members and in 1916 there were five families and only twelve members.⁸¹

Mr. Stoughton's comment to C. N. Jenkins on the West Union situation was that they had had Dr. Gray for six weeks or two months for the past two years for which they paid him four hundred dollars. "After he was there they did not care to hear anyone unless they were \$2000 men; they did offer to have the convention send the Rev. T. B. Fisher there at the time he was State Superintendent, but Mr. Fisher would not listen to this arrangement at all."⁸²

In 1922 the County Court House burned. The Universalist Church, being vacant and but one block from the Central Square, was rented for almost two years by the Board of Supervisors at a yearly fee of one thousand dollars. The court convened in the audience room and the offices were located

⁸⁰ Ibid., Vol. 3, p. 462.

⁸¹ J. W. Ainsworth, West Union, Iowa, to H. L. Stoughton, Osage, Iowa, 1916.

⁸² H. L. Stoughton, Osage, Iowa, to C. N. Jenkins, Cedar Rapids, Iowa, July 26, 1918.

in the basement. The county removed the seats and windows and promised to preserve the same, guaranteeing they would be replaced in as good condition as before.⁸³

The Zion English Lutheran Church was organized in 1924. They rented the Universalist Church for about eleven years. This congregation did not care to buy the property except at a bargain price as it was too close to the business section to be entirely suitable for church use.⁸⁴

In 1934 the Bell Fund was collected and two years later the Burbank Memorial Church on South Vine Street was sold to a group of West Union business men--F. W. Loftus, L. Bockenstedt, A. W. Hausladen, Harry Raney and S. M. Foote, Jr. The Universalist "denomination never had many members in West Union and they have held no [regular] services there for at least twenty years."⁸⁵

Dormant Parishes In 1943

In 1943 there were two dormant parishes which had retained their property and four active churches in the Universalist denomination in the state of Iowa. The two dormant ones were Boone and Osage.

Boone

Mrs. Melissa Jane Scott had given the Boone parish

⁸³

I.U.C., Secretary's Record, Vol. 4, p. 14.

⁸⁴

Conversation with Walter Beal, editor and owner of the West Union Argo-Gazette, 1943, and West Union Argo-Gazette, May 20, 1936.

⁸⁵

Ibid.

\$3500 to be used in erecting a new Universalist church, to be called "The Boone-Scott Memorial Church", on the condition that the Convention would pay her interest on the sum during her life time. She received five hundred dollars of the principal before her death in 1910 at the age of ninety-four, the remainder was to be paid to the Convention as the Boone church was financially able to do it.⁸⁶ This fund was the nucleus about which Rev. Amos Crum worked in raising an additional sum in 1899 for the erection of the new church home. While there he was fatally injured but the work moved onward. The site had been chosen at the corner of Seventh and Carroll Streets, facing the City park and the work was begun in 1899.⁸⁷ In July of the following year the Rev. W. A. Williams became the pastor; and during his pastorate of one year the beautiful new church was dedicated on the last day of the fifty-eighth session of the Iowa Universalist Convention, September 9th "amid memories and hopes divine."⁸⁸ The pastor preached the dedicatory sermon, and a responsive dedicatory service closed the ceremony. At this eventful time the official board at Boone was composed of; C. T. Ballou, President; Olive Tillson, Secretary; Charles Tucker, Treasurer; Josephine Barnes, Trustee; A. P. Fogg [charter member] Trustee; and Philander Wells, Trustee.⁸⁹

⁸⁶ I.U.C., Secretary's Record, Vol. 3, p. 299.

⁸⁷ Boone Standard, May 6 and Sept. 23, 1899.

⁸⁸ I.U.C., Secretary's Record, Vol. 3, p. 115.

⁸⁹ Program of the Dedication of the First Universalist Church of Boone, Iowa.

"In September, 1901, the Rev. H. C. Richardson became pastor and served for three years. From 1904 until 1907 there were occasional services and regular Sunday School sessions but the church had no regular pastor until December, 1907, when the Rev. Jennie L. Bartholomew was called. She remained until November, 1909. [Both Mr. Richardson and Miss Bartholomew lived in Boone but also served the Mitchellville parish as pastor, going there once each month.] Supplies and the Tri-State Superintendent, the Rev. A. R. Tillinghast filled the pulpit until September, 1910, when the Rev. Loomis O. Black came as pastor. He remained for two and one half years.

"In the fall [of 1911] the Boone church entertained the joint convention of the Universalist and Unitarian churches. At this time the Rev. Joseph Fort Newton and other noted preachers were heard. Mr. Black organized a vested choir and a boys club. Many young people were attracted to the church and the Sunday School was very prosperous. He was followed by the Rev. C. A. Polson, who came in January 1913 and remained for two years."⁹⁰

Soon after his arrival Mr. H. L. Stoughton wrote,

"They are much pleased with Mr. Polson He is preaching them fine sermons but has not as yet increased the number in attendance at the services to quite the extent they had wished or had thought he would. In a letter Mr. Harpel said, 'after the sermon the Sunday morning before, Mr. Ballou reflected that he had heard some sermons by \$5000 men, but never heard one any better than Mr. Polson gave that morning!'"⁹¹

"At the close of Mr. Polson's pastorate an attempt was made to arouse [a] greater interest and the Rev. E. Dean Ellenwood came for a series of meetings which lasted two weeks. [They were arranged by the State Superintendent, the Rev. F. J. Miller]. These meetings were successful and twelve new members were added to the church, one of them a former State Superintendent of Universalist churches in Iowa, Rev. R. Brunning, who was then living with a son near Boone. When Mr. Brunning was ninety years of age, he gave a Sunday morning sermon in which he spoke of the seventy years of change he had witnessed. At the close of these special services, Dr. John

90

Dr. Effie McCollum Jones, Brief History of the First Universalist Church of Boone, Iowa, (Manuscript)(hereafter Jones, Boone).

91

H. L. Stoughton, Osage, Iowa, to S. J. Oldfield, Mitchellville, Iowa, April 9, 1913.

Cook became the pastor for one year."⁹²

Dr. Cook resided in Mitchellville and divided his time between the two parishes. The Boone church was not happy in the arrangement.

"During the winter of 1917, the Rev. Curtis Reese [the Unitarian pastor in Des Moines] gave a very fine series of evening services.

"Following Dr. Cook's pastorate the church was without a minister until 1923. [Being seven years pastorless is very hard on a parish, many hard won gains are lost]. However, Sunday School services were continued through the entire time and Rev. O. G. Colegrove of Mitchellville [the State Superintendent] conducted services on one Sunday morning of each month. During the balance of the time the pulpit was filled by various members of the congregation. L. V. Harpel gave several series of lectures and occasionally a visiting minister was heard."⁹³

Mr. Harpel wrote in 1917 they could raise only three hundred dollars for services. They asked assistance from the convention in order to continue the services of the Rev. Mr. Reese.⁹⁴ Mr. Stoughton quoted Mr. Harpel a year later as saying

"the Boone parish was dead, absolutely, until after the war, anyway, and he didn't know whether they could revive after the war or not; that some of their members had moved away, and some were too old to do anything, and the rest were at war; that they couldn't even raise money enough to pay a janitor, to say nothing of paying a minister; that there was no use trying to do anything at Boone in anyway until after the war."⁹⁵

⁹²Jones, Boone, op. cit.

⁹³Ibid.

⁹⁴L. V. Harpel, Boone, Iowa, to Dr. F. J. Drake, Webster City, Iowa, May 9, 1917.

⁹⁵H. L. Stoughton, Osage, Iowa, to C. N. Jenkins, Cedar Rapids, Iowa, July 18, 1918.

Mr. Stoughton replied, "Personally, I believe that it is a mistake to allow all energy to be given to the war activities by the people at home, for I believe there is all the more need for church activities to be continued in war time."⁹⁶

The church was redecorated the last time in 1919 and Dr. L. R. Robinson, the Mid-West Superintendent, conducted a series of meetings in 1921.⁹⁷ The Rev. Gustave H. Zastrow, the last resident minister for this parish, was the pastor from 1921 to 1923.

"He organized several Boy Scout troops and because of his special work with the children attracted a large Sunday School membership. Mr. Zastrow's scout organization became permanent, so he was the founder of the Boone County Scout Organization. Following Mr. Zastrow's pastorate, lay services were maintained for some time. [Services were directed occasionally by the Rev. Mr. Black who was residing there, by L. V. Harpel, Dr. Kate Harpel, the Rev. Laura B. Galer and the Rev. O. G. Colegrove, the State Superintendent, who came once a month.] In the winter of 1924-25 the Rev. Mr. Adlard of Des Moines [the Unitarian pastor] gave a series of twenty evening lectures. Miss Frances Mason and a few friends paid the entire expense of this course. From 1925 to 1927, the Rev. Effie McCollum Jones of Webster City preached each Sunday evening. Again during the winter of 1927-28, Mr. Adlard preached in the Library Hall for some months, but his removal from the state ended that arrangement. In 1929 the church was closed and since then no services have been held."⁹⁸

Mrs. E. N. Mann was authorized to rent the building to the Women's Club in 1933, but later the Rev. O. G.

⁹⁶ H. L. Stoughton, Osage, Iowa to L. V. Harpel, Boone Iowa, June 25, 1918.

⁹⁷ Conversation with Dr. Kate Harpel, Boone, Iowa and disbursements noted in a treasurer's record.

⁹⁸ Jones, Boone, op. cit.

Colegrove reported that it was leased to the Church of the Open Bible.⁹⁹ For the past ten years this group has occupied the church and Mrs. Mann has been acting as a steward for the Convention in supervising the property, collecting the rent and making all of the necessary repairs.

September 5, 1934 a memorial service was held in the church honoring the departed members of the First Universalist Church of Boone.

"One of the charter members ... lives in Boone, Mrs. Olive Tillson ... The oldest member of the church is Mrs. Prescott, who is ninety-five years old. Both of these honor members expect to attend the Sunday services. Special music by Mr. J. J. Shelley and Mrs. Geo. Hutson, accompanied by Mrs. V. B. Davis. All members are urged to be present at this occasion and all friends are extended a cordial welcome."¹⁰⁰

After the Rev. O. G. Colegrove moved from the state in 1937 there was no State Superintendent. The Rev. Ernest Whitesmith of Mitchellville was commissioned by the Convention to do all he could in Boone. After sometime he reported there were only four families remaining in the city who were interested in liberalism.¹⁰¹

The Boone "Church has exercised an educational and liberalizing influence in the community. The pulpit was open to suffrage workers as well as others with a message. Such women as Dr. Anna Howard Shaw spoke in this church when she

99

I.U.C., Secretary's Record, Vol. 4, p. 130. (Feb. 18, 1934).

100

Clipping from a Boone newspaper, dated Sept. 2, 1934.

101

Rev. Ernest Whitesmith, Mitchellville, Iowa, to Dr. Effie McCollum Jones, Webster City, Iowa, Oct. 1, 1938.

was denied the use of other churches.¹⁰² Dr. Harpel thought that must have occurred at the time the Woman Suffrage Convention met in Boone in 1903. She was herself county chairman of the suffrage convention and Vice President of the State Suffrage Convention. This was also the first church in Boone to have a woman minister.¹⁰³

Osage

The Rev. J. L. Everton resigned as pastor of the Osage Universalist Church, April 15, 1900. That marked the close of one of the most successful pastorates of this church. The Rev. S. L. Taylor accepted a call and remained a little more than a year. Osage paid him \$550 and the use of the parsonage and Otranto paid him \$150.¹⁰⁴ No doubt he was in the latter place about one-fourth of the time. The Rev. W. S. Ralph came in 1904, and died three years later; his wife, Agnes Ralph preached until 1908. All the auxiliaries were active during their pastorate, about forty were in the Sunday School and twelve in the Union.¹⁰⁵ The letter sent to Mrs. Ralph in behalf of the Board expresses the regard cherished by others for her departed husband.

"In the sorrow that has come to you we are all made to mourn. We feel that in the death of Mr. Ralph an efficient and loyal worker had passed from among us,

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Jones, Boone, op. cit.

¹⁰³

Conversation with Dr. Kate Harpel and Mrs. E. N. Mann, Boone, Iowa.

¹⁰⁴

First Universalist Church, Osage, Iowa, Society Book, Vol. I, p. 73.

¹⁰⁵

Ibid., pp. 80-113.

who sorely need his counsel and cooperation, and the Iowa Convention and all its workers will long feel the loss most keenly. He has been a faithful and effective pastor; a loyal and enthusiastic Universalist; a man whom to know was to honor and esteem. We appreciated his worth as a minister and hope that our younger men may emulate his fidelity We loved him for his qualities of personal gentleness and worth and will always be richer for having had his friendship. We want you to feel that our sincere sympathy is with you in this trial and we earnestly pray that the faith, which it has been for so many years his joy to teach for the comfort of others, may sustain you in this affliction."¹⁰⁶

The Rev. Arthur W. McDavitt was called April 12, 1908, and was to come as soon as he was graduated from Lombard College. His salary was five hundred dollars and one-fourth of his time was spent at West Union. That fall he was "granted a leave of absence for October eleventh with the understanding that he should return with a wife." He must have fulfilled the "understanding" for he was ordained in the Osage Church, December fifteenth. The president of Lombard College, Dr. L. B. Fisher preached a "strong and discerning discourse on the theme, 'Prophets'". Other ministers present were the Tri-State Superintendent, A. R. Tillinghast, Dr. Effie McCollum Jones, and George Patterson.¹⁰⁷

Mr. McDavitt remained a little more than a year. The Rev. Jennie Bartholomew accepted a call in January, 1910. She remained for three of the most successful years the parish had experienced. On January 1, 1913 she married a member of the Osage Church, Arad Hitchcock. During her pastorate

¹⁰⁶

I.U.C., Secretary's Record, Vol. 3, p. 216.

¹⁰⁷

First Universalist Society of Osage, Iowa, Secretary's Record, Vol. 1, pp. 110-124.

a Layman's League was organized with sixteen members, the Y. P. C. U. was organized and the average Sunday School attendance increased to twenty-five. She was very active in the community. For instance, in 1912 she was guest speaker at a P. E. O. Banquet, the Organ Club, the Young Ladies Guild, the Ladies Progressive Club, the Farmers Institute, the County Teachers' Institute, the Osage High School, four times she addressed the Cedar Valley Seminary and gave a temperance talk to the Christian Endeavor. She felt it did not increase the Church attendance or membership. However at the last annual meeting she reported performing six wedding ceremonies, receiving seven new members and christening one child.¹⁰⁸

Dr. Drake wrote to the Board concerning Osage in 1911, "I do know they have the busiest woman in our Convention for a pastor. She hasn't even time to take care of her health. All is well with a parish with her at the helm."¹⁰⁹ Herbert Stoughton, one of the leading laymen and a life long member of this parish, said, "The church was at its peak under [the] Rev. [Mr.] Everton, - we are as near that peak as we have ever been under Miss Bartholomew."¹¹⁰

The Rev. Frank W. Miller accepted the position as pastor and State Superintendent in 1913. The parish supplied six hundred dollars and the state five hundred for his salary

¹⁰⁸Ibid., Vol. 1, pp. 125-167.

¹⁰⁹Dr. F. J. Drake, Webster City, Iowa to the Executive Board, Nov. 25, 1911.

¹¹⁰Conversation with the Rev. Jennie B. Hitchcock, Osage, Iowa in the summer of 1943.

since he was serving both groups. The first year Professor Knapp arranged some very successful evening services and the young people were unusually active during his ministry. The State Convention was entertained in September, 1915. Mr. Miller's pastorate ended three years later although he remained in the city for nearly a year engaging in a business venture. The parish was in debt about seven hundred dollars, during his pastorate because they had installed electricity in the church and parsonage and installed two new furnaces. They held lay services with occasional preaching by Mr. Miller and Mrs. Hitchcock until the debt was paid.¹¹¹

The Rev. A. W. Altenbern came from Stoughton, Wisconsin to accept the pastorate in 1919 at a salary of twelve hundred dollars. He remained until the last Sunday in October when he moved to Junction City, Kansas. In accepting his resignation the trustees expressed their deep regret that he must leave them.¹¹² Mrs. Hitchcock said Mr. Altenbern was popular in the community and as a strong Mason he drew a desirable group that did not go any place else to church. If it had been possible to retain him the church would have grown stronger but his wife's ambition to live in a larger and more modern city impelled him to move.¹¹³

The Rev. E. A. Lewis arrived November 1, 1922 to

¹¹¹ First Universalist Society of Osage, Iowa, Secretary's Record, Vol. 1, pp. 174-270.

¹¹² Ibid.

¹¹³ Conversation with the Rev. Jennie B. Hitchcock, Osage, Iowa, summer of 1943.

assume his pastoral duties.¹¹⁴ On December 22nd the local church lost its most prominent lay leader, Herbert L. Stoughton. At the annual meeting "Every member of the parish who was present was filled with a deep feeling....a sense of loss....but sustained by a firm faith and resolve to carry on....to continue the work so nobly supported by our deceased brother."¹¹⁵ He and his father before him had been so devoted to the cause of this church that they gave liberally of their counsel, time, effort and means to sustain it. There were no other mature and vigorous leaders upon whom the burden might fall.

Excerpts from the papers at his death bear witness to the high regard of fellow citizens.

"In the passing from this life of Herbert L. Stoughton Sunday afternoon the community suffered an irreparable loss. He stood for all that was high and noble and was unflinching, tho gracious and kindly in the fight against wrong.

"Herbert Stoughton gave his life for his country just as truly as our boys who fell on Flanders field. All during the war he worked unceasingly for the cause for which the world tragedy was fought and since the war closed his duties....were heavier than during the war. No soldier came to him with his perplexities in regard to his compensation, his insurance or other difficulties, but who was greeted with the same genial smile and the same unfailing courtesy shown his wealthiest client. His service to the Red Cross during and since the war has also been of inestimable value.

"His career as a lawyer is best expressed in a tribute paid to him in a recent history of the County. It reads as follows, 'Few lawyers have made a more lasting impression on the bar of the state, both for legal

¹¹⁴First Universalist Society of Osage, Iowa, Secretary's Record, Vol. 2, p. 35.

¹¹⁵ibid.

ability of a high order and for the individuality of a personal character which impresses itself upon a community. Of a family conspicuous for strong intellect, indomitable courage and energy, he entered upon his career as a lawyer and such is the force of his character and natural qualifications that he has overcome all obstacles and written his name high on the legal arch. His course in the court room is characterized by a calmness and dignity that indicates reserve strength!"¹¹⁶

"He was secretary of the Iowa Universalist State Convention and in all probability there was no better known or more efficient worker in his denomination than he. He lived a life in conformity with his belief and was happy and contented in it."¹¹⁷

"His work as a member of the city council was that of progressiveness and for the best interests of the city. For years he served as secretary of the Board of Directors of the Cedar Valley Seminary of this city; was also a member of the Board of Directors of Lombard College for years and rendered much more service of value to the public."¹¹⁸

Mr. J. S. Schuyler said, "He was the most honorable man I ever met."¹¹⁹ (He was only forty-eight years old at the time of his death.)

By August, 1923 the Rev. Mr. Lewis departed because the church was in debt and unable to pay his salary. For six months they conducted lay services, with occasional aid from the Mid-West Superintendent, Dr. L. R. Robinson; the State Superintendent, the Rev. O. G. Colegrove and the Rev. Jennie B. Hitchcock.¹²⁰

The Rev. F. Oesten - Sacken was called for one year

¹¹⁶ Excerpts from the papers at his death, December 31, 1922. Clippings were found among the Osage Church Records.

¹¹⁷ Ibid.

¹¹⁸ Ibid.

¹¹⁹ Ibid.

¹²⁰ First Universalist Society of Osage, Iowa, Secretary's Record.

in March 1924 but asked to be allowed to resign the following May because of a lack of funds. Rev. Oesten - Sacken was disappointed and felt he was not given a fair trial.¹²¹ He was a good speaker, with a dominant personality. It was of him that one of his parishoners is reported to have said after the morning service, "He got too close to God, I didn't follow him."

During the remainder of 1924 and 1925 they again held lay services. The condition of the parish is revealed by a report made at the annual meeting in January, 1926. "The Committee is proud to report that the attendance has been good, the devotion and loyalty of the church people perfectly splendid. We want to thank you each and everyone for your hearty cooperation."¹²² They needed a pastor and knowing that the Rev. F. W. Miller was just recovering from a long illness in Galesburg, Illinois, and was without a parish, they decided to invite him to return at his own convenience.¹²³

February 26, 1926, Mr. Miller and "his delightful family" were welcomed home again after an absence of seven years. "Together pastor and people have been a united force for Christian growth and progress in this community."¹²⁴ During the first year the building was repaired and the entrance remodeled, the Y. P. C. U. was reorganized with a membership of fifteen under the leadership of Mrs. Miller

¹²¹Ibid., Vol. 2, pp. 44-55.

¹²²Ibid., Vol. 2, p. 60.

¹²³Ibid., Vol. 2, p. 62.

¹²⁴Ibid., Vol. 2, p. 65.

and the Sunday School had an attendance of seventeen. The indomitable Ladies' Aid Society had never needed reorganization because it was one of the most active groups in the state, especially after the coming of the Rev. Jennie Bartholomew in 1910. A young people's choir was organized by Marion Vance.¹²⁵

During that summer about forty Osage Universalists met the Austin, Minnesota Universalists for a picnic. They learned the Osage church needed a new basement floor so they supplied the money, two hundred ten dollars and fifty cents, while Mr. Miller and others used the rainy days to tear up the old one, take out the dirt and fill it in with sand. The two groups shared Thanksgiving dinner in Osage.^{126*}

The Osage Church paid two hundred and fifty dollars to purchase a pew in the Washington Memorial Universalist Church in memory of their beloved, Herbert Stoughton.¹²⁷

Mr. Miller and the men of the Church did much work on the property or for it to decrease the expenditure of money. They built a back porch on the parish house, painted the parsonage, cut the winter's supply of wood in the Hitchcock wood lot, reroofed and redecorated the church.¹²⁸

Mr. and Mrs. Miller were in Osage ten years in their last pastorate. The parish was "grateful for the help and

¹²⁵Ibid., Vol. 2, pp. 65-74.

¹²⁶Ibid., Vol. 2, pp. 78, 84.

¹²⁷Ibid., Vol. 2, p. 87.

¹²⁸Ibid., Vol. 2, pp. 102-178.

*Osage entertained the State Convention in 1927 and 1933, Secretary's Record, Vol. 2, pp. 85, 145.

blessings of Mr. Miller's long and faithful services." The Ladies' Aid and Y. P. C. U. were the mainstays of the parish. By 1935 the large and capable young people's group that had been together for nine years found that it was time for them to go elsewhere "to try their wings." There was no oncoming group to take their place and so the Union ceased to exist.¹²⁹

"In times of depression leadership is developed, reforms brought forth and accepted, great friendships are formed and Christian character expressed. As the way becomes more difficult it but binds us together in a stronger faith and a nobler work."¹³⁰

Such were the years that the Millers spent in Osage. He had preserved the church and its ideals for that generation of young people.

When he resigned in March, 1936 he spoke these words of advice, for he knew they could no longer maintain a pastor.

"My last word to you is keep up your contact with each other, through the local organization, have occasional sermons, keep in touch with the Iowa State Convention, send delegates and support its programs -- help in every possible way to make your faith a living faith."¹³¹

Mrs. Stoughton wrote,

"The whole town seems to be shocked by the going of the Miller family and of course we of the church will feel it very keenly. They have made quite a place for themselves in the community. There are however only ten individuals contributing to the support of the church. Not one has a regular salary adequate to support a small family."¹³²

¹²⁹Ibid., Vol. 2, pp. 174 & 178.

¹³⁰Ibid., Vol. 2, p. 157.

¹³¹Ibid., Vol. 2, p. 178.

¹³²Mrs. Stoughton, Osage, Iowa to Dr. Effie McCollum Jones of Webster City, Iowa, January 23, 1936.

The Rev. Mr. Polson came, at the behest of the State Superintendent, the Rev. Mr. Colegrove, and stayed for a month around Easter time. He appreciated that they could not employ a pastor. He conferred with the Congregational minister, the Rev. Stiles Lessly, and they both recommended a federation.¹³³ On May 24, 1936 the Rev. Jennie Bartholomew Hitchcock received a letter from Florence Dorow, clerk of the First Congregational Church, which read,

"In a special business meeting at the regular church service of the local Congregational Church, on Sunday, May 10, 1936, it was voted that an invitation be extended to the local Universalist Church to enter into negotiations concerning a federation of the local Congregational and Universalist Churches. A committee of three is to be appointed from this church to carry on such negotiations."¹³⁴

A committee composed of Herman Lesch, Jennie B. Hitchcock, and Elizabeth Stoughton met with the Congregational committee and discussed federation but no workable plan was adopted.¹³⁵ Both of these churches had suffered reverses for similar reasons and a federation would have greatly benefited both. They could have stood together in a community where most of the population belonged to the authoritarian denominations.

In 1936 the Rev. Jennie Bartholomew Hitchcock was in charge of the Easter service and the Millers were guests

¹³³First Universalist Society of Osage, Iowa, Secretary's Record, Vol. 2, p. 181.

¹³⁴Florence Dorow, Clerk of First Congregational Church, Osage, Iowa to Mrs. Arad Hitchcock, Secretary of the First Universalist Church, Osage, Iowa, May 24, 1936.

¹³⁵First Universalist Society, Osage, Iowa, Secretary's Record, Vol. 2, p. 182. (hereafter Osage Society).

of the congregation. For the following six months the Rev. Edna P. Bruner of Waterloo held a service each month. In 1938 the same plan was carried out. The following year, Robert Housden, a divinity student at Tufts, was home on his vacation and came to supply the pulpit in the months of July and August. Miss Bruner returned in September that year.¹³⁶

Mrs. Arad Hitchcock (Jennie Bartholomew) the most dynamic personality in the church, was stricken with paralysis in 1937. At that time the only organizations that remained active were the Ladies Aid Society with seventeen members and the Missionary Society with four members.¹³⁷

The officers chosen in 1942 were the Moderator, Arad Hitchcock; Secretary, the Rev. Jennie B. Hitchcock; Treasurer, Elizabeth Stoughton; Trustees, W. H. Davis, Fred Lesch and George Clements.¹³⁸ The first and last Moderators of this church were named Arad Hitchcock. The man occupying the position in 1942 was a grandson of the first Moderator.

Not long ago when Mr. Hoffer passed away there were left eight old ladies and two old men. They were all past eighty except the Hitchcocks and Mrs. Stoughton who were in their sixties, and Mrs. Hitchcock had had a stroke that would prevent her from participating in active public life again. They made a very hard decision - they could no longer carry

¹³⁶ Ibid., Vol. 2, pp. 189-210.

¹³⁷ Conversation with the Rev. Jennie Bartholomew Hitchcock in Osage in July 1943.

¹³⁸ Osage Society, op. cit., Vol. 2, p. 219.

on - perhaps they should sell the church to the Lutherans who had a growing church organization, and the proceeds could be used elsewhere in the state to perpetuate the Universalist faith in the lives of other young people in other communities.¹³⁹ It was not the end of the book but the last page of that chapter.

Active Churches in 1943

The four active churches in the state in 1943 were Mitchellville, Mt. Pleasant, Waterloo and Webster City.

Mitchellville

The Mitchellville church was one "where country people and town folks gather, little children and grandparents worship and serve and rejoice together, and the little church truly has become a holy shrine in the midst of a people," wrote the Tri-State Superintendent, in 1909. Fortunately, in this small community a comparatively large and substantial group of devoted liberals had gathered; whether it was because of the leadership and example of such men as Uncle Thomas Mitchell or the existence of a seminary in the early day, or merely chance that drew this band in to one community; who can tell? Up to 1940 there was always a strong, devoted nucleus of thirty or forty people who were the guarantee that the church would function and the torch of liberalism would be passed on to each succeeding generation.

¹³⁹ Conversation with the Rev. Jennie Bartholomew Hitchcock.

From 1900 to 1915 they did not have a resident pastor. Most frequently, they shared a minister with Boone and services were held regularly once a month unless they were without a minister. From 1900 to 1905 the Rev. Harry Richardson filled the pulpit monthly and preached at the Industrial School each time he came.¹⁴⁰ In 1903 he conducted a series of meetings wherein the parishoners participated. The following year Dr. W. H. McGlauflin, Tri-State Superintendent, assisted the pastor with another series of meetings.¹⁴¹ The Superintendent came again in 1905 when they were pastorless. "He was an inspiration to the church,...the Sunday School and the Union. He set forth their needs and duties and made many good suggestions."¹⁴² Later the clerk, Myra Rothrock, wrote, "Our people count it a great treat to have Dr. McGlauflin with us. He seems to take as much interest in the Sunday School and the Union as in the preaching service and is a great help to"¹⁴³ all three.

In 1905, Mr. S. H. Daniels was appointed to solicit funds "for a minister's salary regardless of who that minister might be."¹⁴⁴ It appears that some would not make a pledge until the minister had been called; but they could hardly call one without knowing whether or not he could be paid or how much they could pay him for his services. Perhaps this

¹⁴⁰First Universalist Church, Mitchellville, Polk County, Iowa, Secretary's Record, Vol. 1, pp. 63-80. (hereafter, Mitchellville Church).

¹⁴¹Ibid., Vol. 1, pp. 72, 76.

¹⁴²Ibid., Vol. 1, p. 78.

¹⁴³Ibid., Vol. 1, p. 85.

¹⁴⁴Ibid., Vol. 1, p. 82.

accounts for the repeated hesitancy and reconsideration in the foregoing years when the question of a pastor was considered.

During 1905 and the first six months of 1906 the pulpit was supplied by Dr. McGlauflin; C. W. Hillstrom of Lombard College; the Rev. Mrs. Jones of Waterloo; the Rev. W. S. Ralph of Osage; the Rev. Mrs. Crum; the Rev. Mrs. Andrews of Omaha; Dr. L. B. Fisher of Lombard College, whose "presence among us was an inspiration;" the Rev. Mrs. Hughes of Table Grove, Illinois, "her sermons are good but her personality is as great a benefit to us;" the Rev. Turrell, D.D.; and the Rev. A. R. Tillinghast spoke on "The World As We Make It" to a Union meeting in the park.¹⁴⁵

In July, 1906, the parish unanimously called the Rev. Mary Garard Andrews. She came first in September to fill her monthly appointment at a salary of seventeen dollars per Sunday. She resigned in April of the following year but continued holding services until September when she rededicated the rehabilitated church. That summer they had painted, papered, built a sidewalk, a platform and installed new seats. That fall without a pastor they entertained the Iowa Convention.¹⁴⁶

The Rev. Geo. Longbrake of Ohio and the Rev. Jennie Bartholomew were candidates. The parish at once wished to call Miss Bartholomew and received Superintendent Tilling-

¹⁴⁵ Ibid., Vol. 1, pp. 82-90.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid., Vol. 1, pp. 92-101.

hast's permission. "Our people are delighted with Miss Bartholomew....she is an inspiration to all, especially to the young people....Her presence is so full of cheer and helpfulness."¹⁴⁷ She began her pastorate in January, 1908 holding services on alternate Sundays. Sometime late in 1909 she resigned her pastorate in Boone and made her headquarters in Mitchellville until she accepted a call to Osage the following January.

In the past decade a number of the older generation had passed away. Such names as Mrs. Mary DeLong, Aunt Jane Sternberg, Mrs. Catharine Clipper, Anna Weeks, Elmer Ball, Elizabeth Conkwright, Mrs. Jane Tomlinson, A. Rothrock, Robert Patterson and Mrs. George Copley would appear no more.¹⁴⁸ Of Robert Patterson was written,

"For many years in the Municipal affairs of the town as well as on the Board of Education, he served as an official and contributed his counsel and time to the upbuilding of town and public school. Rigidly honest, he never failed to perform his duties with credit. As a neighbor and friend he was warm-hearted, genial and kind to all."

Of Mrs. Copley they said, "To know her was to love, honor and reverence her."¹⁴⁹ During the same interval there had been a slow continuous growth, totaling about thirty-six additions, many of whom became leaders in the church.

During 1910 the pulpit was supplied regularly once a month and sometimes once every two weeks by the Rev. N. E.

¹⁴⁷ Ibid., Vol. 1, pp. 102, 103.

¹⁴⁸ Ibid., Vol. 1, pp. 74-130.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid., Vol. 1, p. 75 - (a clipping from the Mitchellville Index).

Spicer of Webster City; Rev. A. R. Tillinghast, Tri-State Superintendent; the Rev. Effic McCollum Jones of Waterloo; Dr. McClauflin, General Superintendent; and the Rev. Loomis Black of Boone. The Rev. Mr. Tillinghast held a series of meetings by means of which five members were added to the church roll.¹⁵⁰

During 1911 the pulpit was again supplied at more or less regular intervals by the Rev. N. E. Spicer, the Rev. T. B. Fisher, Tri-State Superintendent; the Rev. Miss Bartholomew and the Rev. Loomis Black. The Rev. Spicer occupied the pulpit more often than anyone else.¹⁵¹ For the first six months of 1912, the Rev. T. B. Fisher conducted the services. Thereafter, the Revs. N. E. Spicer, Mary Safford, Loomis Black and Laura B. Galer preached there.¹⁵² When the latter preached Miss Rothrock wrote, "Both sermons were fine and good words for Mrs. Galer were heard on every side."¹⁵³ She was in Mitchellville several times the latter part of the year. At the annual meeting she was invited to come regularly once a month as their pastor.¹⁵⁴ In 1914 and 1915 Mrs. Galer and Mr. Polson shared the pulpit, until Dr. John S. Cook held a very successful series of meetings, bringing into the membership twelve new people; after which, he was jointly called by the Boone and Mitchellville parishes. He was the first resident

¹⁵⁰Ibid., Vol. 1, p. 145.

¹⁵¹Ibid., Vol. 1, pp. 140-148.

¹⁵²Ibid., Vol. 1, pp. 149-151.

¹⁵³Ibid., Vol. 1, p. 153.

¹⁵⁴Ibid., Vol. 1, p. 160.

pastor Mitchellville had had since the days of the Seminary. The following year he devoted all of his time to the latter parish, which had some financial assistance from the state but found it very hard to remain solvent. There was a membership of one hundred twenty-nine of whom seventy-seven were residents. The average church attendance during Dr. Cook's last year was sixty-six. The Union was very active, paying seventy-five dollars on the minister's salary and aiding in the purchase of a new piano.¹⁵⁵

When Dr. Cook resigned in 1917 Mrs. Galer again offered her services as a supply until another permanent pastor could be obtained. "She was greeted by large congregations and the services were enjoyed by all."¹⁵⁶

The "Rev. Laura B. Galer of Mt. Pleasant preached in the Universalist Church last Sunday morning and just before her sermon she held a brief but very impressive service, speaking of our Service Flag, with its stars in honor of our boys who enlisted in answer to their country's call. The parents or nearest relatives present arose as each boy's name was called and remained standing during her prayer."

The boys were Paul Stephens, George Bean, Claire P. Patterson and Fred Dailey.¹⁵⁷

The Rev. Mary L. Hadley of Friendship, New York was a candidate as was the Rev. O. G. Colegrove of Owatonna, Minnesota. The latter was called and began his work October 6, 1917. This was the beginning of the longest pastorate in the history of this church, nineteen and one-half years. In 1919

¹⁵⁵Ibid., Vol. 2, pp. 82-143.

¹⁵⁶Ibid., Vol. 2, p. 193.

¹⁵⁷Ibid., Vol. 2, p. 202.

he helped this congregation celebrate their Golden Jubilee; while in 1935 they shared with him his joy and satisfaction in celebrating the fiftieth anniversary of his ordination. He had for half a century been an active Universalist minister.

"Pastor and wife returned last Friday after a Missionary journey of two thousand three hundred forty miles through Illinois, Michigan and Ohio, where they visited friends of other days and preached in churches served by them in years gone by. They report a pleasant journey with successful meetings."

They "were happily surprised upon their return to find the church and parish hall cleaned and a reception planned for them on Monday, July 15th."¹⁵⁸

The Seventy-Seventh Annual Session of the Iowa State Convention met with the parish in 1919 and on the last day, June 21st, the Commemorative Sermon was delivered by Dr. John S. Lowe, the history of the first fifty years was read by C. L. Henney and messages from former pastors were read.¹⁵⁹

In 1922 there was a new group of younger people organized in the Young Peoples Christian Union. Miss Ida Seems wrote,

"The Alumni of the Mitchellville Y.P.C.U. will always feel the greatest interest in you as their successors in carrying on the work of the Y.P.C.U. in our beloved church. When your turn to be the Alumni comes may your memories be as dear to you as ours are to us. May your motto be 'For Christ and His Church' "¹⁶⁰

It continued to be an active organization until 1933,

¹⁵⁸ Ibid., Clipping from Mitchellville Index, Mounted in Secretary's Record, Vol. 3, p. 200.

¹⁵⁹ I. U. C., Secretary's Record, Vol. 3, p. 545.

¹⁶⁰ First Universalist Church of Mitchellville, Polk County, Iowa, Y. P. C. U., Secretary's Record, Vol. 1, p. 1.

by which time most of these young people had gone away to work and live in other communities.

In 1922 a new furnace was installed and a very successful series of meetings was conducted by Dr. L. R. Robinson, the Mid-West Superintendent.¹⁶¹ The Rev. Mr. Colegrove continued the custom begun by Dr. Cook of holding a Homecoming Day in the fall. Many gathered from the neighboring towns and others wrote letters. It was especially interesting to all the older people and impressive to the younger ones. The pastor coöperated well with the other ministers and churches in the town. Throughout this century union meetings were held regularly in the summer, during coal shortages or when one church was closed for repairs. In 1923 the Christians met with the Universalists for the latter reason.¹⁶²

At the close of 1923 Mr. Colegrove reported he had christened twenty-eight children, twenty-three in this church, and received thirty-three people into membership during the five years of his ministry in Mitchellville.¹⁶³

The Rev. Laura B. Galer and the Rev. Otto Raspe conducted a series of services the following year and laid the corner stone for the new parsonage. Until five years ago before this parish was always having financial shortages. Now, under Mr. Colegrove's guidance they not only had all obligations paid up to date but they had saved and raised

¹⁶¹Mitchellville Church, Vol. 2, pp. 291-292.

¹⁶²Ibid., Vol. 2, p. 294.

¹⁶³Ibid., Vol. 3, p. 23.

by pledges two thousand nine hundred five dollars for the construction of a parsonage, and a parish hall to connect the former with the church. The two new buildings were dedicated on August thirty-first. Robert Ball, who had helped his brother Nathaniel build the church, was also the architect and chief carpenter for the new parsonage.¹⁶⁴

During the construction work a severe wind storm blew out two of the church windows, one of which was the Thomas Mitchell Memorial window, and all regretted that they were unable to find anyone who could engrave the new one.¹⁶⁵

At the Iowa Universalist Convention in Waterloo in 1924 Mrs. Minnie O. Colegrove was ordained. The services were conducted by three women ministers then active in the state, Dr. Effie McCollum Jones, the Rev. Laura Bowman Galer, and the Rev. Jennie Bartholomew Hitchcock.¹⁶⁶

From 1925 to 1940 there were many losses suffered by this parish at the hands of the "Grim Reaper". All such losses should be expected but for so many to come within a decade was a heavy blow, and the society was deprived of one leader after another, which was demoralizing.

In 1914 an outstanding leader in the local church and the state organization, Samuel J. Oldfield, passed away. In 1907 he was spoken of as "though not advanced in years-- yet a veteran in the service of our cause in Iowa."¹⁶⁷ He

¹⁶⁴Ibid., Vol. 3, pp. 27-33.

¹⁶⁵Ibid., Vol. 3, p. 38.

¹⁶⁶Ibid., Vol. 3, p. 37.

¹⁶⁷I. U. C., Secretary's Record, Vol. 3, p. 206.

was the state treasurer for twenty years. The year before his death, he was too ill to attend the Convention and they expressed their loss in being "deprived of his counsel and the benefit of his mature judgment."¹⁶⁸ Mrs. Galer said, "His life was his sermon."¹⁶⁹ He came to Iowa from Ohio with his parents in 1856 at the age of six,

"settling in Jasper County, which was then on the border-land. He was a farmer boy, and early in his life, [he] carried the mail across the prairies [on] horseback from Des Moines to Marshalltown, much of the way [over] unbroken prairie. In his young manhood he taught school. In the year 1869 the family moved to Mitchellville and here in this village [he] has lived out his life. On these streets, in the marts of business and in the homes, year in and year out the kindly face of Sam Oldfield has greeted his fellowman."¹⁷⁰

He was a man of unquestioned integrity who discharged all his responsibilities efficiently. A charter member of this church and active in every branch of its work, church, choir and Sunday School, he was missed by the whole parish. But there were others to carry on.

About ten years later Mrs. Sarah Henney, an earnest worker in the church for many years, passed away. In her going "the church has lost much. For thirteen years she was Superintendent of the Sunday School. She was the efficient president of the Ladies' Society for a number of years. She gave head, heart and hand to the service of the church."¹⁷¹

¹⁶⁸ Ibid., Vol. 3, p. 420.

¹⁶⁹ Mitchellville Church, Vol. 2, p. 107.

¹⁷⁰ A loose clipping found in the Mitchellville Record Books.

¹⁷¹ Mitchellville Church, Vol. 2, p. 48.

Two years later (1928) her husband, C. L. Henney, who had taught in the Sunday School for twenty years and had been the clerk of the church for eleven years, followed his wife. He was with Sherman in the Civil War; went west to Nebraska where the drought, the Sioux Indians, and the grasshoppers turned him back to Mitchellville. He worked for many years in George Moore's Mercantile Store, for twenty years was secretary of the school board and for sixteen years was the postmaster in Mitchellville.¹⁷² His family wrote after his death:

"It was to the Sunday School in the closing days of his life that he turned for his comfort and joy. It was to it that he could give his last bit of service. When he could not be present he grieved for the companionship he found there and the comfort and joy of the service and the habit of the years when broken.... troubled him, for he was so anxious that the teachings of his faith....that were so necessary to right thinking....should endure and never be allowed to die."¹⁷³

The passing of Eugene Mason, Ella Dailey Woodrow, I. H. Woodrow, Love and Dickie Tanner, Robert Ball (the last surviving charter member), Charles Griffiths, Ed Reid, Della Tucker, Mr. and Mrs. Louis Tucker, Millie Seems Jones, and many others who served on the board, in the Sunday School, in the Ladies' Aid, on committees for building, repairing and painting the parish plant greatly weakened the church. One of the gravest losses was the passing of Miss Ida Seems who had been very active in every department of her beloved church

¹⁷²Ibid.

¹⁷³ Undated letter signed by The Henney Family.

since she joined in 1890. She became a Trustee in 1911, which office she continuously held until her death in 1939. She had been Superintendent of the Sunday School the last thirteen years of her life, and Secretary of the Ladies' Aid.¹⁷⁴

"In the death of Miss Ida Seems on July 9, 1939 our church and its associated organizations sustained the severest loss it has suffered for many years. Her going left a place which cannot be filled in her unique way; for hers was a very distinct personality. We can, however, endeavor to emulate her quiet dignity and poise, her pleasant easy manners, and her unflinching sense of responsibility."¹⁷⁵

"The Seems home was always a center of culture and hospitality. The mother, Sarah Seems was an artist, many drawings by her hand being cherished in the home today and Miss Seems, as well as her sister, Millie, inherited this artistic trait from their Mother. The father was a pioneer doctor of the community and the one son Gaillard carried on the profession at the father's death. For years music was taught in the home and the love of good reading by the entire family is evidenced by the shelves of books collected through the years and always generously shared with friends."¹⁷⁶

Miss Ida and her sister, Mrs. Jones, opened their library to the public until the local Women's Club began one for the city, whereupon they gave many of their books to form a nucleus about which to build an unendowed library for the town.¹⁷⁷ (Miss Seems taught school for 47 years).

Before the Rev. O. G. Colegrove left the church in 1937, he admitted to membership the members of three families

¹⁷⁴ Clipping from the Mitchellville Index placed in the Mitchellville Church, op. cit., Vol. 3, p. 9.

¹⁷⁵ First Universalist Church of Mitchellville, Polk County, Iowa, Sunday School Secretary's Record, Vol. 7, p. 141.

¹⁷⁶ Mitchellville Church, op. cit., Vol. 3, p. 9.

¹⁷⁷ Personal recollection of Elva Tucker.

long attendants and contributors. He made all the necessary arrangements for the new pastor and called a Board meeting to call their attention to a leak in the parish hall roof and attended to the trimming of some trees and the removal of others. He was always very meticulous about details, so nothing was unfinished when he left.¹⁷⁸

for
On Palm Sunday, [^]his final service

"Friends from all other churches in town and other denominations were present, showing their high regard and warm friendship as well as appreciation of the pastoral services rendered by the Colegroves in Mitchellville... They have done much constructive work in their church, also in our town and community as they were always interested and active in any movement that was for the betterment of the town and community."¹⁷⁹

These words penned at the State Convention three years before fittingly describe the Rev. Colegrove and his work.

"For fifty years he has preached the faith he holds so dear and for fifty years he has translated that faith into living what he preached. His unfaltering faith, his unswerving loyalty, his unselfish devotion have been an inspiration to his parishioners. Through times of doubt and stress it was his courageous faith that was the challenge to carry on. The church has been his cherished child and for her he has sacrificed and given all he possessed.

"There is not a family in the Mitchellville parish but has a sacred memory of many personal, intimate services in their hours of need. The entire community has given him loyal support and respect. Such a record he has left wherever he has served and the Universalist church is blessed to have had our faith so well demonstrated in these many years of his living that faith. May we not recall these lines, 'As love pours out in service, God pours in and lo! Comes spaciousness of

¹⁷⁸ Mitchellville Church, Vol. 3, pp. 235-236.

¹⁷⁹ Clippings from the Mitchellville Index mounted in the Mitchellville Church, op. cit., Vol. 3, p. 8.

soul'".¹⁸⁰

In 1933 there were about forty resident members and thirty in the Sunday School. By 1942 the Rev. Whitesmith reported there were thirty six on the active membership list and about thirty of them lived in Des Moines and there was no Sunday School.¹⁸¹ Miss Genevria Mason, who has been the clerk over twenty years, and her mother Mrs. Charlotte Mason were among the last of the life-long Universalists who have always been active in the Mitchellville church, and who still live in the village.

After the Rev. Ernest Whitesmith became pastor the grounds were landscaped with funds raised by Floyd Bishop. The passage of time had wrought havoc with the beautiful old trees that had once graced the spacious lawn. A new furnace was installed, using the bequest of Miss Ida Seems, which had been specifically made for that purpose. New hymnals were also purchased.¹⁸²

Mr. "Whitesmith has won the admiration of the people of the community by his unusual ability as a minister, a public speaker and a lecturer." But becoming discouraged with the local church situation and somewhat despondent over liberalism in general he resigned his pastorate in 1942 and has been succeeded by the Rev. Verna B. Reinghans of Niles, Michigan.¹⁸³ The officers of this parish in 1943 were:

¹⁸⁰ I. U. C., Secretary's Record, Vol. 4, p. 194.

¹⁸¹ Mitchellville Church, op. cit., Vol. 4, p. 20.

¹⁸² Ibid., Vol. 3, pp. 255-75.

¹⁸³ Ibid., Vol. 4, pp. 23-36.

Moderator, Mr. J. J. Wilson; Clerk, Genevria Mason; Financial Secretary, F. C. Gabbert; Treasurer, Mrs. Thomas Wildman; Trustees, Victor Tornquist, O. S. Nicholson, Thomas Wildman.¹⁸⁴ *

In this small Iowa village the Universalist Church has been active since 1860. Both the congregation and its ministers have built a splendid tradition of friendliness in the community. Many strangers have been drawn into its sphere by that trait that permeates the atmosphere of the little New England church. Rev. Pliny Allen, Jr. has written, "I am convinced ... that the church which persists in living simply and truly as a good friend in its community does the greater work." The traditions and heritage of the present generation passed on by the valiant, friendly men and women of this congregation are a source of pride and inspiration to the remaining loyal band to carry on. In the future lie new opportunities for service.

Mt. Pleasant

At the turn of the century Mr. Pleasant was enjoying the pastorate of a capable young man and his wife, the Rev. and Mrs. W. D. Buchanan. They came in 1899¹⁸⁵ and remained until 1905 when he accepted a call to Tacoma,

¹⁸⁴ Miss Genevria Mason, Mitchellville, Iowa to Elva Tucker, Waterloo, February, 1944.

¹⁸⁵ First Universalist Church of Mt. Pleasant, Iowa, Secretary's Record, Vol. 2, p. 79. (Hereafter Mt. Pleasant Church)

* State Conventions were held in Mitchellville in 1901, 1907, 1919, 1925, 1928, 1933, 1937.

Washington.¹⁸⁶ During that pastorate all the auxiliaries were more active than ^{they} formerly ^{were} or would be for many years to come. Seven united with the church; the Rev. W. R. Cole was sent as their representative to the State Anti-Saloon League; the Y.P.C.U. was responsible for the church music; a Twentieth Century Club was organized in 1901 that held just four meetings; in 1904 the Murray Club was reorganized but survived only a year; the Sunday School was quite active with the following officers in 1902, Superintendent, I. P. VanCise; Assistant Superintendent, Mrs. W. D. Buchanan; Secretary, Josephine Leedham; Treasurer, Abbie Davis; Librarians, Howard VanCise and Edward Orton; Organist, Emma Wait.¹⁸⁷

The Ladies Aid gave a reception for the new pastor at the I. P. Van Cise home, served an alumni banquet, made a layette for the prospective twentieth child of a colored woman, Mrs. George Green;¹⁸⁸ and planned a nd built a parsonage. The latter was financed by a gift of two hundred dollars from Mary L. Pingree of Coon Rapids, two hundred from the State Convention, one thousand dollars from Brother Joel G. Van Cise of Summit, New Jersey and another one thousand was subscribed locally. The work was begun in August, 1903 and completed at a total cost of two thousand three hundred dollars.¹⁸⁹

¹⁸⁶ Ibid., Vol. 2, p. 111.

¹⁸⁷ Ibid., Vol. 2, pp. 84-101.

¹⁸⁸ First Universalist Church of Mt. Pleasant, Iowa, Ladies Aid Society (Industrial Society and later A.U.W. (Secretary's Record (hereafter Mt. Pleasant Ladies Aid Society))

¹⁸⁹ Mt. Pleasant Church, op. cit., Vol. 2, pp. 97-109.

Mr. Buchanan's departing words to the parish were "That he would carry with him none but pleasant memories of his stay in our midst. He asked the people to have faith in God and in themselves, not to slacken or abate in their efforts; not to wait to secure a new pastor but [urged that] steps be taken in that direction soon."¹⁹⁰

In the year 1905, both Dr. Effie McCollum Jones of Waterloo and Dr. W. H. McGlaufflin, Tri-State Superintendent, came to discuss their problems with the church people and to arrange for services. The latter planned that the Rev. Leon P. Jones, Dr. L. B. Fisher and he would supply the pulpit at a cost of ten dollars per Sunday until May first when Bloomfield would be ready to employ a part time pastor. Apparently it was not possible to carry out this plan because later they granted to the Baptists the use of their church since the Baptist church building had been destroyed by fire. A nominal fee of two dollars per week was charged for upkeep. January 15, 1907 the Baptists were still using the building.¹⁹¹

On September first, 1907 they called the Rev. Paul Jordan for half-time services. After a short interval of only eight months he found it necessary to resign because of the changed conditions at Table Grove (his other parish in Illinois) and with Lombard College. During the remainder of 1908 Dr. Reifsnider of Galesburg, Illinois, the Rev. A. R. Tillinghast, Tri-State Superintendent, the Rev. Mr. Barret, the Rev. Mr. Caldwell and Dr. L. B. Fisher of Lombard

¹⁹⁰ Ibid., Vol. 2, p. 111.

¹⁹¹ Ibid., Vol. 2, pp. 116-123.

occupied the pulpit.¹⁹²

In September, 1909, Mr. L. F. Willard, a charter member, moved west to Oregon to live with his son. The parish wrote, "We recognize his devotion and zeal as he gave long and faithful service to this church and we all regret his going from our midst."¹⁹³ "He was one of the finest men we have ever known. When we think of a definition of optimism, we think of Mr. Willard."¹⁹⁴

From 1909 to 1912 Dr. Fisher came for services on alternate Sundays. The Rev. Laura Bowman preached here June 19, 1910 and was asked to return July 3rd. They then arranged with her for summer services.¹⁹⁵ This was quite an honor because the parish was so devoted to Dr. Fisher, a cultured gentleman and an eloquent speaker, that they did not like most of the substitutes he sent from the divinity school. When she was asked to become their pastor she refused because they were not interested in opening a Sunday School.¹⁹⁶

In 1912 Dr. Fisher could no longer come because of ill-health. On his last Sunday they presented to him twenty dollars in gold, - a gift of appreciation.¹⁹⁷ In December they voted to call the Rev. W. E. Leavitt for alternate Sundays at fifteen dollars a Sunday.¹⁹⁸ A year later around

¹⁹² Ibid., Vol. 2, pp. 126-133.

¹⁹³ Ibid., Vol. 2, p. 138.

¹⁹⁴ Ibid., Vol. 3, a clipping mounted on page 3.

¹⁹⁵ Ibid., Vol. 2, pp. 138 and 143.

¹⁹⁶ Conversation with Rev. Laura B. Galer, Mt. Pleasant, Iowa, 1943.

¹⁹⁷ Mt. Pleasant Church, op. cit., Vol. 2, p. 152.

¹⁹⁸ Ibid., Vol. 2, p. 152.

Christmas they decided to start a Sunday School.¹⁹⁹ He remained as the pastor until March, 1915.²⁰⁰

In 1914 I. P. Van Cise passed away. He was the only one of the boys in a family of nine children to remain in Mt. Pleasant. He was born in Pennsylvania and came to this community in 1857 with his Quaker parents. He (and all his family) had been very active in the Universalist Church. His influence was long felt and his place hard to fill in this parish.²⁰¹

In March, 1915 when a committee was appointed to supervise the redecoration of the parsonage it was composed of F. W. Wait, Mrs. C. A. Archer, and Mrs. Galer. This is the first mention of the latter, who was the Rev. Laura Bowman and who had recently married Roger S. Galer, a prominent lawyer in Mt. Pleasant. In October they both joined the church.²⁰²

In 1915 the ministers who served the parish were Dr. Fisher, five Sundays; the Rev. Leavitt, five Sundays; the Rev. Almira Cheney, seven Sundays and the Rev. Mrs. Galer one Sunday. The officers chosen for 1916 were Moderator, Mrs. R. S. Galer; Treasurer, J. A. Throop; Secretary, Mary Williams; Trustees, F. G. Wait, R. S. Galer, J. A. Gillis.²⁰³

¹⁹⁹ Ibid., Vol. 2, p. 153.

²⁰⁰ Ibid., Vol. 3, p. 1.

²⁰¹ Ibid., Vol. 2, p. 163.

²⁰² Ibid., Vol. 3, pp. 1,2.

²⁰³ Ibid., Vol. 3, pp. 6,7.

May 25, 1919 Dr. Fisher held a Memorial service in the Mt. Pleasant church and from then to 1922 he came regularly every two weeks for services. During that time the parish sent fifty dollars to the Webster City Trustees for the care of the Rev. Harry F. Shook, who was quite ill as a result of his services in Europe as an army chaplain. The parsonage and all the wooden portions of the church were painted. Mr. Galer donated electric lights to the church and Mrs. Galer gave a lantern. A new furnace was installed for which Mrs. Willits collected the funds. Its installation involved building a larger chimney, and excavating the basement.²⁰⁴

The Rev. Pliny Allen, pastor of the Galesburg, Illinois, Universalist Church, came once a month for evening services from 1922 to 1926. Mrs. Galer supplied much of the time with a variety of services, sermons, pictures, illustrated sermons and book reviews. In 1922 Mrs. Galer began the Christmas Candle Light Service, which has been continued every year with the assistance of the children of the Sunday School, who decorated the building and participated in the ritual. In 1924 before the seventy-fifth anniversary the church was papered, a new steel ceiling was installed, the organ was repaired and new linoleum was laid in the hall. In the anniversary service Miss Josephine Leedham read the history and Mrs. Galer conducted the Memorial Service for past ministers and members. A picnic at the Galer home was

²⁰⁴ Ibid., Vol. 3, pp. 18-36.

enjoyed by fifty guests. In the evening the Rev. Pliny Allen gave the anniversary sermon "which was a masterpiece."²⁰⁵

On July 4, 1926 at a picnic in Saunders Grove a Y.P.C.U. was organized. There were eleven resident and four non-resident members. Many splendid devotional and social activities were enjoyed. In 1927 they raised the money to send Mary Willits and Harold Davis to the State Convention in Osage and the National Convention in Minneapolis.²⁰⁶ In 1932 the young people attended a number of institutes and conferences; two Rallies at Keokuk, one in the spring and the other in the fall with the Unitarians and Congregationalists; the Liberal Young Peoples' Rally of the Mississippi Valley at Moline, Illinois; the Turkey Run Institute and the Unitarian Institute at McGregor. "The Y.P.C.U. wishes to thank Mrs. Galer for all she has done for us. We realize that without her we could not have attended many of the young people's rallies."²⁰⁷ It was a very active organization until 1935 when the last entries were made, indicating that the needs of this generation had been met.²⁰⁸

In 1926 Mrs. Galer is spoken of as the pastor. In the two years prior to that she seemed to be doing the bulk of the pastoral work.²⁰⁹ The Iowa Universalist Convention

²⁰⁵ Ibid., Vol. 3, pp. 38-43.

²⁰⁶ First Universalist Church of Mt. Pleasant, Iowa, Y.P.C.U. Secretary's Record (no page numbers) (hereafter Mt. Pleasant Y.P.C.U.)

²⁰⁷ Mt. Pleasant Church, op. cit., Vol. 4 (no page numbers)

²⁰⁸ Mt. Pleasant Y.P.C.U., op. cit.

²⁰⁹ Mt. Pleasant Church, op. cit., Vol. 3, p. 62.

was entertained by this small congregation in June, 1929. Now that the era of the automobile had come and hard surfaced roads had reached this part of the state, Mt. Pleasant could be reached as easily as any other city in Iowa. They entertained two other sessions, once in 1934 and again in 1941.

At the annual meeting in 1930, Mrs. Galer asked to be relieved of some of the burden of work as a permanent supply.²¹⁰ They agreed to get some one to fill the pulpit for half of the time, but no record was made of the ministers or speakers they obtained. At that time there were twenty-six church members living in Mt. Pleasant, twenty elsewhere; the Sunday School had an average attendance of fourteen.²¹¹ Mrs. Eliza Rhodes gave the church one thousand dollars in 1930, the interest of which was to be used for current expenses. It was of real assistance in the difficult depression years that lay ahead. The following year William Schliep bequeathed two hundred dollars to the Y.P.C.U.²¹²

At the annual meeting in 1932 "A general 'patting on the back' followed, realizing that our church is not in debt as many churches are and that though small, by each one putting his shoulder to the wheel, we have been able to keep going in good condition."²¹³ They lost Emma Van Cise by death and Josephine Leedham by removal, and the next four years were lost from this small fellowship. Their pastor was an

²¹⁰ Ibid., Vol. 3, p. 70.

²¹¹ Ibid., Vol. 3, p. 73.

²¹² Ibid., Vol. 4, (no page nos.).

²¹³ Ibid., Vol. 4, (no page nos.).

unusually busy and capable person. In 1932 the following is a list of her activities as reported at the annual meeting:

1. conducted thirty-six services.
2. arranged for five speakers (Unitarian, Universalist and Congregational)
3. supplied at Keokuk, Peoria and Waterloo.
4. served on two State Convention committees.
5. served on National Board of G. S. S. A.
6. a faculty member of Y. P. S. U. Institute at McGregor.
7. served on two committees of the County Ministerial Association.
8. on invitation spoke at:
 - a. Iowa and Illinois Universalist Conventions.
 - b. G. S. S. A. annual meeting.
 - c. May meeting of the Illinois Universalist Women.
 - d. winter rally of Illinois Y. P. C. U.
 - e. spring rally of Iowa Y. P. S. U.²¹⁴

This was only a typical year's activities for her. She was an unusually capable and versatile pastor.

The following year she addressed college groups on seven occasions at Iowa Wesleyan. Later she conducted a Teaching Institute in Cincinnati, Ohio for the Universalist and Unitarian churches. She taught Bible at the Mid-West Institute, addressed the Older Boys and Girls Conference, conducted two Chapel services at the college, led a religious forum, gave three addresses to the Oxford Club at the College on the work of a minister and taught a class of women during Lent in her home. She was editor of the denominational adult Sunday School lessons entitled "The Helper".²¹⁵ In August,

²¹⁴ Ibid., Vol. 4, (no page numbers).

²¹⁵ Ibid., Vol. 4, (no page numbers).

1937 she attended the International Conference for Religious Freedom at Oxford, England. Meanwhile she found the time to write a book entitled "Bible for the Modern Minds" assisted by Roger S. Galer and Dr. Floyd Ross of Iowa Wesleyan College. In recognition of her very splendid work in the field of liberal religious education she was awarded an honorary degree of Doctor of Divinity on June 10, 1940 by the Meadville Theological School in Chicago, Illinois.²¹⁶

In 1936 Mrs. Galer reported to the parish "A few new contacts but no real growth." Deaths occurred each year among the older members while there were few additions. "The many activities outside the local church, though not outside the denomination or religious interests have drawn heavily on time and strength and have not been of value in building up this society. I feel that the church has been not only patient but generous -- the gift from the Society of expenses to the ministers' annual retreat at Turkey Run ~~was~~ without precedent in Iowa Universalism and was greatly appreciated, especially since the church has had no increase in membership or influence this year."²¹⁷

Mrs. Willits, the secretary, had previously recorded that "Several of the teachers and others in town are discovering that we have a fine preacher in our little church and are coming out on Sunday nights to enjoy her sermons along with us." And the college young people after hearing her in the

²¹⁶ Ibid., Vol. 5, (no page numbers).

²¹⁷ Ibid., Vol. 4, (no page numbers).

forums and chapel services were attracted to the Universalist Church for occasional services.²¹⁸

A fundamental part of Mrs. Galers ministry has been the living of her profession of universal brotherhood. Her leadership was shown in the work of The Ladies Aid and Mission Circle, which were exceedingly active in doing for others and in giving not only to the church budget but to other worthy causes. They were often the admiration of the other ladies at the time of the annual State Convention of Universalists. For years Mrs. Galer conducted the Christmas service at the County Home and the Ladies gave a gift to every inmate. During depression years they sewed for the Red Cross and the needy in Mt. Pleasant, making layettes, blankets, comforts and clothing to give away. It was they who administered the Chamberlin Fund, to relieve the suffering of the poor without regard for their religious affiliations. To denominational causes they gave twenty-five dollars to the Lombard Endowment Fund, ten dollars for the National Memorial window at the church in Washington, D. C., thirty dollars for the Memorial Church, ten yards of toweling to the Clara Barton Home for diabetics, and sent boxes of clothing and books to South and North Carolina. To international causes for the building of world brotherhood, they sent two sheets on a Christmas ship to Germany in 1924, dressed and sent a doll to Japan, adopted a French orphan in 1918 and in 1942 paid

²¹⁸Ibid., Vol. 4, (no page numbers).

for the support of a refugee.²¹⁹ This group was never large, numbering about fifteen and in 1943 they were predominantly older people. That was also true in the church where the attendance seldom exceeded fifteen and they were mostly representatives of an older generation.

Mrs. Galer, foreseeing that in cooperation there is strength, especially when numbers are few, urged this church to form a circuit with the Keokuk Unitarian Church and help support the latter's pastor, the Rev. R. M. Pratt. Toward that end she exchanged pulpits with him. The Unitarian church needed the assistance in order to retain a capable minister. But the members of this congregation could not see the necessity of making any change.²²⁰ (They had Mrs. Galer.)

In her report to the parish in 1939, Mrs. Galer said, "The activities may advertise the Universalist Church somewhat but not enough to draw a congregation there. The question before the Society is that of continued services, temporary closing or some arrangement with the Congregational body."²²¹ The latter had found it necessary to close a part of an attractive stone plant because of a dwindling congregation and a shortage of funds. The Universalists refused to consider the latter suggestion and have held services for the spring, summer and autumn months when the older

²¹⁹ Mt. Pleasant, Ladies Aid Society, op. cit.

²²⁰ Conversation with Rev. Laura B. Galer, Mt. Pleasant, Iowa, 1943.

²²¹ Mt. Pleasant Church, op. cit., Vol. 5.

people could get out. The Sunday School is small with two classes taught by Mr. and Mrs. Galer. The officers for 1943 were, Trustees, Harold Davis, Mary Williams, Grace Roberts; Treasurer, Edith Willits; Treasurer of the Chamberlin Fund, Charlotte Davis; Clerk, Grace Roberts.²²² They are carrying on as of yore, loyal to and proud of their faith and heritage.

This article which appeared in the Mt. Pleasant News, November 28, 1938 concerning this parish was worth preserving:

"The church in which the services were held was erected in the years 1856-57 and it looks today as it looked when finished over eighty years ago. Neither fire, nor wind nor the elements have changed it and only minor repairs and interior arrangements have been made during that time. The church is the oldest church edifice in Mt. Pleasant still used for religious purposes and we think the oldest building in the city even formerly used for religious services. [Perhaps there is one exception, the African Methodist Church]

"There is a colonial atmosphere about the Universalist Church.... There is the ante room with the stairs leading to the gallery, which looks down on the main floor and towards the pulpit. There are the two doors opening into the meeting room, one on each side in good orthodox fashion. And there are the pews so reminiscent of the old days. The red carpet on the floor, the inside shutters, now almost extinct. A few short pews in what was formerly the 'amen' corner of all good churches. The hand carved walnut pulpit furniture. All [these] the same as [were] installed during those days of the past.

"Of course, there have been changes. There is now a furnace instead of the three old wood heaters. Electric lights now take the place of the old chandeliers with their gas jets. But all in all there still remains the spirit of the old days of a 'meeting house.'

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Ibid., Vol. 5.

"We congratulate the Universalists on their ninety years of service in this community. We are inclined to believe that when it comes to Christian activities of the practical type, no other church in Mt. Pleasant can measure up to the record of the Universalists. 'Clothe the naked, feed the hungry, care for the sick'. Quietly year after year like a placid stream the ministrations of this church have flowed into thousands of homes bringing relief physical, mental and spiritual."²²³

Waterloo

Waterloo had a fine church home at the corner of Mulberry and Fourth Streets, across from Lincoln Park, which was dedicated in 1890. At the beginning of the century Rev. Frank H. York was the pastor. He remained until December 1903.²²⁴

"Rev. Effie McCollum Jones came to Waterloo in 1904 and remained for twelve years. She took up her work, not as among strangers but among friends, as she had worked with her husband, the Rev. B. W. Jones when he had charge of the church [June 1892 to March, 1894.] Mr. Jones had resigned to accept a call to the Universalist Church in Barre, Vermont where he died in 1898. Mrs. Jones was called in 1904 to take the Waterloo pastorate. Under her guidance the membership grew more rapidly than at any other period in its history. [She had received 192²²⁵ new members, one of them was Miss Laura Bowman, later the Dr. Laura Bowman Galer of Mt. Pleasant. There were thirty in the Y.P.C.U.; an average Sunday School attendance from eighty-five to one hundred.]²²⁶ All departments of the church were well organized and it was during these years that the Universalist church enjoyed some of the finest music in the city. Mrs. Jones contributed much to the spirit of the community. Both pastor and members played a large part in public affairs during the twelve years of her stay in Waterloo. She resigned to become a National Field Director for the National Woman Suffrage Association.

"Dr. Jones was followed by the Rev. H. L. Haywood, who held the pulpit for nearly three years. During his

²²³ Ibid., Vol. 5.

²²⁴ Universalist Church and Society, Waterloo, Iowa, Secretary's Record, Vol. 1, p. 263. (Hereafter Waterloo Church)

²²⁵ Waterloo Church Pastor's Record, Vol. 2.

²²⁶ Waterloo Church, op. cit., Vol. 2, p. 93.

stay plans were made to turn the church into a community organization, [as had been done in Cedar Rapids, under Joseph Fort Newton]. It was proposed to have the church remain under the direction of the Universalist Convention but to change the name to 'Liberal Christian Church'. It was believed that this form of fellowship would attract many more liberal minded persons including some who might object to the name 'Universalist'. The contributions of a larger parish were needed to meet their increasing financial burdens. This change took place and a number were added to the membership list. Mr. Haywood's sermons were printed in the Waterloo Tribune and in pamphlet form. They were distributed generously but the demand always exceeded the supply. In January 1919, the Rev. Mr. Haywood accepted a call to the Edwards Congregational Church of Davenport, Iowa."²²⁷

"During the three years that he has been among us, we have grown to esteem him highly for his intense spirituality and for the breadth and strength of his intellect."²²⁸

However, he left a parish very deeply in debt and unable to engage another pastor or to continue services.²²⁹ Not only was their financial situation depressing but the congregation had lost their faith in the mission of the Universalist Church in Waterloo. They had failed to keep alive and growing the strong church that Dr. Jones and her predecessors had built in the previous half century.

"The Society had realized for a number of years that the location of the church was no longer suitable for church purposes. Business was pressing close and most of the churches had abandoned their down town locations for quieter homes. Early in 1919 [when they were liquidating other property holdings] the church property was sold to Mr. Ford of Cedar Rapids whose company soon erected a large theater [The Strand] on the place

²²⁷ Dr. E. M. Jones, Short History of the Universalist Church and Society of Waterloo, Iowa. (Hereafter Jones, Water-100).

²²⁸ Waterloo Church, op. cit., Vol. 2, p. 181.

²²⁹ Ibid., Vol. 2, p. 177.

that had been a home to the Universalists for so many years. Following this event, no services were held until late in 1920 when they were resumed in the Russell-Lamson Hotel parlors."²³⁰

The leaders of the State Convention were deeply concerned over the situation. In 1919 "every attempt was made to persuade the Waterloo parish to hold the property, secure another minister and proceed. A vote by telegram was taken and carried unanimously, offering the Waterloo parish \$2500 per year for two years if they would retain the property and secure a minister. The offer was refused."²³¹ The following year Dr. Jones was asked to go to Waterloo in the interest of the Great Drive and get the names of those people really interested in the church.²³² In 1920 Judge Roger S. Galer had offered the Waterloo parish two thousand dollars a year on running expenses from the General Convention if they would consider resuming services. They rejected this proposal.²³³

Meanwhile, on January 28, 1920 a meeting was called to order and presided over by the Mid-West Superintendent, Dr. Luther Riley Robinson where fifty members voted to reorganize the Universalist Church and Society. Dr. Robinson had been chosen by the General Convention to do field work in this area. It was because of his sturdy integrity, wholehearted consecration, and deep faith in this liberal

²³⁰ Jones, Waterloo, op. cit.

²³¹ I. U. C., Secretary's Record, Vol. 3, p. 523.

²³² Ibid., Vol. 3, p. 548.

²³³ Ibid., Vol. 3, p. 569.

denomination that he inspired the despairing Waterloo parish to organize anew and resume their responsibilities so that they and their children might enjoy the mental satisfaction and spiritual up-lift of its ministrations and the joy of its fellowship. The officers chosen were: President, H. B. Cropper; (who had safeguarded the funds accruing from the sale of their property.); Vice-President, Dr. C. N. Shane; Secretary, Mrs. Clara Walker; Treasurer, H. E. Weatherwax; Trustees, C. C. Kohagen, Mrs. Henry Grout, N. W. Frisbie, Mrs. Myrta Naven, Frank E. Adams.²³⁴

"After meeting for a few months in the Russell-Lamson Hotel, the Society moved to the Hileman-Gindt Chapel where services were held every Sunday until the James Black property on Independence Avenue was ready for occupancy. This large home was bought in 1923. On the second floor there is an unusually beautiful auditorium that seats about two hundred people, a choir room and a pastors study. The first floor has a well equipped kitchen and dining room and several large rooms which are used as Sunday School quarters, parlors for all social functions, bazaars and meetings of all departments of church work. The grounds are spacious and serve well for outdoor activities."²³⁵

At the close of the first crucial year the Rev. Otto Raspe reported,

"In the ten months of the present pastorate, a Sunday School now numbering fifty-one members has been organized - Bible classes and a Men's noon day forum were made part of the Sunday School. A chapter of the order of Universalist Comrades with twelve members has been organized, also a Clara Barton Guild of eighteen members."²³⁶

²³⁴ Waterloo Church, op. cit., Vol. 2, p. 190.

²³⁵ Jones, Waterloo, op. cit.

²³⁶ Waterloo Church, op. cit., Vol. 2, p. 200.

During the year of the dedication of the new church, twenty-seven new members were admitted.²³⁷ "Mr. Raspe entered most heartily into civic affairs and placed the Waterloo church once more in the active ranks of community life."²³⁸ He accepted a call in 1924 to go to Cambridge, Massachusetts.²³⁹ It was almost a year before the Rev. W. O. Bodell arrived, he remained three years. During his pastorate the parish lost a very capable and active layman who had been the treasurer for many years.

"In the loss of our beloved brother, Herbert E. Weatherwax our church has been deprived of one of its staunchest and most loyal members and officers. The loss is heavy for us to bear, both as an organization and as individuals. Not one of us but feels the richer for contacts with his spirit of kindness and absolute dependability. We all loved him and will truly miss and mourn him. Resolved:- That his life was an example to us all, of loyalty and service, and the memory of it, will be an influence for good that will abide with us always."²⁴⁰

The Rev. Conard C. Rheiner was pastor for a year and a half. He was intelligent, ambitious and creative but he lacked a sense of balance and the fitness of things. He was young and when he recognized he was not meeting the standard of accomplishment set by the General Convention, tendered his resignation in December, 1929. A part of it read,

²³⁷ Ibid., Vol. 2, p. 227.

²³⁸ Jones, Waterloo, op. cit.

²³⁹ Waterloo Church, op. cit., Vol. 2, p. 232.

²⁴⁰ Ibid., Vol. 2, p. 270.

"I came to Waterloo one year ago next Sunday, a recent graduate from Tufts College (Crane) Theological School, a newly-wed, and only seven days after placing my feet on United States soil. As you can well imagine, I was enthusiastic about my first parish; I was hopeful as to its possibilities, looking forward to the day in the not too distant future when I could face my fellow workers and say, 'There, I've done something worth while'. As I labor among you that day seems to recede farther and farther into eternal time."²⁴¹

The Rev. Edna P. Bruner's pastorate began February 1, 1931.²⁴² She was unanimously called by the parish at a salary of two thousand dollars which was in succeeding years reduced because of the national economic crisis. Under her very capable leadership during the ensuing ten years the church grew in numbers, knowledge and faith. She was a religious educator, the Church School teachers were trained, a curriculum and library developed for a school of about sixty pupils. Under the leadership of Richard Shane a Y.P.C.U. was organized in 1931²⁴³ and revived again in 1934 with Robert Housden and Herbert Shane²⁴⁴ as the leaders. The pastor directed very valuable study and discussion programs for the group. Adult study groups were organized.²⁴⁵ The idea of a monthly Family Night at the church was evolved and found very satisfying in good fellowship. Mrs. Opal Rasmussen was for more than a decade the very able director.²⁴⁶

²⁴¹ Ibid., Vol. 3, p. 16.

²⁴² Ibid., Vol. 3, p. 36.

²⁴³ Ibid., Vol. 3, p. 48.

²⁴⁴ Ibid., Vol. 3, p. 143.

²⁴⁵ Ibid., Vol. 3, p. 155.

²⁴⁶ Ibid., Vol. 3 p. 48 and conversation with Opal Rasmussen, Cedar Falls, Iowa.

Miss Bruner was not only active in building up her own parish but in the community and the denomination as well. In the city today her name is synonymous with the Universalist Church. Her report to the parish in 1931 gives some impression of her community service.

1. gave three book reviews.
2. guest speaker and installing chaplain for the De Molay order.
3. spoke to the D.A.R. on "Internationalism".
4. spoke to the Fortnightly Club twice
 - a. "Sino - Japanese situation"
 - b. "Disarmament Conference."
5. lectured to the Presbyterian Church on "The History of Religion in the Philippines."
6. held services in West Union, - April and June
7. taught G.S.S.A. credit course at Y.P.C.U. Institute at Turkey Run.²⁴⁷

She traveled abroad in 1933 and gave a series of lectures at the McGregor Institute. In succeeding years she conducted a seminar for the A.A.U.W.; was dean of the Mid-West Institute; assisted in the Red Cross and Community Chest drives; attended the Mid-West Religious Institute at Lake Geneva, Wisconsin and broadcast church services over W.M.T. in 1934.²⁴⁸

All departments of the church were active and the building was kept in repair. The custodians occupied an apartment in the building. The pastor remarked in 1939, "It

²⁴⁷ Ibid., Vol. 3, p. 57.

²⁴⁸ Ibid., Vol. 3, pp. 57 - 346.

has been a deep joy to minister to a splendid company."²⁴⁹
 At the beginning of the following year she said, "Never in the present pastorate has the work of the church seemed more vital than it has these last months culminating in the church services. Thanks are due the many who have co-operated in attendance, in leadership, in service."²⁵⁰

In 1939 a loss was suffered by this close fellowship from an unexpected quarter. Young Robert Housden, while a student in the divinity school at St. Lawrence University, suddenly became ill and died.²⁵¹ His was a young life of so much promise and all were so fond of him, he was deeply mourned.

On October 7, 1940, Miss Bruner resigned to accept an appointment November 1st, as General Field Worker of the Universalist Church. "The ten years with you have been rich indeed.... I shall leave with deep personal regret."²⁵²
 Thus ended a splendid ministry wherein the attendance had more than doubled. This intelligent, capable, and friendly young woman was to be greatly missed by many.

The Rev. C. Arrington served as interim pastor from December to July, when the Rev. and Mrs. Paul Felt would arrive following his graduation from divinity school.²⁵³ During his short pastorate of a year, a parsonage was built on

²⁴⁹ Ibid., Vol. 3, p. 312.

²⁵⁰ Ibid., Vol. 3, p. 328.

²⁵¹ Ibid., Vol. 3, p. 329.

²⁵² Ibid., Vol. 3, p. 349.

²⁵³ Ibid., Vol. 3, p. 365.

the church lot, the church was reincorporated and an excellent Junior Choir was organized. It was with regret the parish bade this capable young man farewell and God-speed on the path he had chosen.

The parish valiantly sustained itself without clerical leadership until 1943 when the Rev. and Mrs. Matthias Heilig arrived to direct the religious activities of this liberal parish that had rallied from the weakness of 1920 to the strength of 1942 when pastorless they could continue an active organization.*

Mr. H. B. Cropper is one of the oldest living members, who for more than thirty-five years actively supported the church. In 1942 Dr. C. N. Shane resigned as president after serving continuously for thirteen years. His son, Richard, had for a number of years capably filled positions of leadership both in this parish and in the state organization. "The reins are being taken up by younger hands that will continue to hold liberal religion aloft."²⁵⁴ The outlook for the future is bright in this parish that has young men and women trained and willing to carry the responsibility of their church. The past has given them courage and enthusiasm to meet the challenge of the tomorrows.

The officers in 1943 were: President, Mrs. Elizabeth Kenney; Vice-President, Dr. C. N. Shane; Secretary, Mrs.

²⁵⁴ Jones, Waterloo, op. cit.

* Miss Nellie Housden reported in 1942 there were 78 active and 59 inactive members. (1875-1942, 661 members had been admitted).

Church Secretary Record, Vol. 3, p. 389.

Charles Kamerdiner; Treasurer, Mrs. M. C. Chapman; Collector, Mrs. Roy Freed; Trustees, Roy Housden, Mrs. Agnes P. Grout, Mrs. Maud Folk, Ralph Alexander, Lloyd Harvey.²⁵⁵ †

Webster City

The St. Paul's Universalist Church has had fewer pastors and their tenure has been longer than in many of the other parishes. They were also fortunate in having their pastors reside in the Webster City community. The following people have ministered to this church in the twentieth century:

Rev. James Alvin Clark	1900-1905
Rev. A. N. Alcott	1905-1907
Rev. N. E. Spicer	1907-1912
Rev. L. C. McLaughlin	} 1912-1917
Rev. H. L. Haywood	
Rev. Harry Shook	} 1917-1919
Rev. Effie McCollum Jones, D.D. ¹	
Rev. Harry Shook	1919-1922
Rev. George Wood	1922-1925
Rev. Effie McCollum Jones, D.D.	1925-1943

During the Rev. N. E. Spicer's pastorate a modern parsonage was erected on Boone Street. "In 1910 Mrs. Eliza Worthington made the church a gift of two thousand dollars. Mrs. Worthington and her husband, Warren, had been ardent supporters of the church since 1884. Mr. Worthington passed away in 1907."²⁵⁶

²⁵⁵

Conversation with Mrs. Elizabeth Kenney, Waterloo, Iowa, 1943.

²⁵⁶

Dr. Effie McCollum Jones, Brief History of St. Paul's Universalist Church, Webster City, Iowa.

† This parish was host to many State Conventions, namely, in 1902, 1908, 1921, 1924, 1930, 1935, 1938, 1939, 1942.

"On April 15, 1917 a parish meeting was held at which time the Rev. Harry F. Shook notified the church that he had been assured of a Commission as Chaplain of the 2nd Infantry Regiment, I.N.G., so tendered his resignation, which was accepted with regret and good wishes. Immediately, arrangements were made with the Rev. Effie McCollum Jones, D. D. to take over the pastorate, beginning August 1, so there would be no intermission in the church work. She remained as pastor until October, 1919, when Mr. Shook was released from the service after being in France with his regiment for more than a year and away from this church for more than two years. Dr. Jones turned the parish back to him, though the church minutes say that she was granted a 2-year leave of absence, that she might engage in lecturing.

"During the two years of her pastorate the church was active in all ways. The official Board met regularly, a condition often absent. The annual meeting on January 7, 1918 mentioned, "the increasing efficiency of the organization of the forces of the church." During these years Dr. Jones was granted the privilege of travelling over the state to help organize the counties for the Fourth and Fifth Liberty loans, but she managed to be in her pulpit every Sunday so the work was not halted by this additional activity on her part. The parsonage, located on Boone Street, had been rented for some time and was not occupied by Dr. Jones and her family, so it was finally sold for \$7500.00, and the money received was largely used in the payment of debts of various sorts.

"Because of the serious epidemic of influenza in the winter of 1918 all churches were closed by public order for 13 Sundays, so it was voted to forego the usual summer vacation to offset, in some measure, the time lost from quarantine. During this pastorate twenty-two members were taken into church membership and eight children were christened. The resolution adopted by the church at her leaving says that "The Universalist Church and Parish feel that the church owes much to her."

"On February 8, 1925 at a parish meeting the Rev. George H. Wood asked for a leave of absence in order that he might candidate at the church in Kinston, N.C. where he later became pastor. He asked Dr. Jones to supply for him during his absence, which she did, as she had meantime bought a home in Webster City and her family was living there. After several had supplied the pulpit following Mr. Wood's departure, Dr. Jones

came back to become pastor again in May, 1925 and still continues in this relation at this writing, July 1, 1944. These more than nineteen years of continuous pastoral relations have been interesting and fruitful years and have been called by some of the older members the best years in the history of the church in more than a generation. No such congregations have been seen as marked the very early years. But the novelty of a new and revolutionary theology had passed and the church had settled down to the steady kind of community and personal work by which alone any church goes forward.

"For a good many years, vesper services were held each Sunday at 5 P.M. except during the summer months. The addresses were usually of a more general character than at the morning service, often being reviews of new books or of outstanding plays, though none were chosen unless they carried the elements of good pulpit teaching. They were very popular and afternoon attendance usually was larger than in the morning. These were felt to have real value and created wide interest outside the church membership.

"Dr. Jones was active in the local Ministerial Association, acting as its president for nearly four years at one time, being secretary for several years at other times, taking part in all union undertakings, such as Lenten meetings, union communion services in different churches and doing her part in all the many series of union preaching services. She was active in all movements for public welfare, worked in the Woman's Club, heading the District committee on International Relations in the Iowa Federation of Woman's Clubs until she withdrew because of illness. In all ways she was an active citizen and both she and her church stood high in the estimation of the whole community.

"The rate of growth has not been as rapid as at some times in the church's history, but it has been steady and dependable. Those who did the spade work of the pioneers have in many cases left behind them worthy sons and daughters who carry the standard which their forbears planted and upheld. Second and third generation children are brought to be christened and later take their places in the ranks of those responsible for the future of the church which is like a part of the family's life blood. Of course, a small town, like Webster City, offers neither advanced educational opportunities nor advantageous openings for young business and professional people so they go away from home to college and then follow to some city with more to offer both in the way of usefulness and of rewards for their work, so are lost to our church life thereafter.

"In a very real sense, therefore, preaching in the Webster City pulpit is like preaching to a procession - literally sowing seed beside all waters and trusting for a harvest to the long dealings of destiny. This state of things also means that the church constituency is clearly divided into two distinct groups. On the one side are all those who are too young for college, young people still of high school age or younger and of these the Sunday School, the choir and the youth social activities are made up. Then there is a gap left by the young men and women who have gone away to college and those just beyond college, who have gone to seek a place for themselves in the world. The other group is made up of the middle-aged, the mature and the elderly. The problem of fusing these two widely different age groups into a unity is far from easy to solve.

"In Webster City the efforts of a capable chorister, Mrs. Gertrude Blake Neudeck, whose grand parents were in the old-time Strawberry Point and Greeley Universalist congregations so she belongs to the Great Tradition, has built an attractive and dependable choir from among the younger people and their elders have come to feel that they have found their mission in the training and developing their young fellow Universalists, so they work with a fine spirit of cooperation.

"The ties with the past are not neglected. The history of the earlier workers is made graphic by such observances as the memorial service held in the cemetery in the early summer, occasionally, to decorate the graves of two of the greater early ministers who, with their wives, are buried in the local Graceland cemetery, - the Rev. B. F. Snook, founder of the church; and the Rev. Amos Crum, D. D. and his wife, the Rev. Sophronia L. Crum. The choir furnishes appropriate music and the children place flowers on the graves while the pastor's brief address at each family lot brings to their minds the love owed by the succeeding generations for those who laid the foundations for our present beloved church.

"Dr. Jones spares no effort to extend the ideals for which the church stands. Year after year she conducts mid-week classes, often popular with men-Universalists, on phases of World Peace and other important movements for social service. During recent summers she has arranged for a series of Sunday morning forums in her church during August, the church's vacation month, with outside speakers to lead the discussions. They have been useful and helped in the great enterprise of adult education for citizenship. She also originated

and for several years was chairman of an annual citizenship school, under the auspices of the local Woman's Club's Civic Department, and held in the Jane Young House, at which notable speakers have dealt with various phases of public duty.

"These outside activities have in no way detracted from the steady furthering of the work of St. Paul's church. Congregations have gradually grown larger on the average; the church school has grown to a membership of about 85 and an average attendance close to fifty. Dr. Jones is Superintendent of this Sunday School, which makes a notable record in all philanthropies of the denomination, in leadership in church social affairs and in the quality of the work that is being done in religious education. There are eight regular graded classes, each of which has its reliable teacher and a regular substitute, so there is never any break in the work of the pupils.

"This church and Sunday School have taken the lead in building up in connection with the sessions of the Iowa Universalist Convention each year sundry discussion classes for the 'teen age young people, so they attend in considerable numbers, pay close attention to all Convention sessions and add greatly to the interest and value of these annual assemblies.

"In 1942 Dr. Jones observed the fiftieth anniversary of her ordination but apparently she still preaches with the keen mental grasp and vigor of a much younger woman. In spite of her wish to be allowed to retire to devote her time and energy to literary activities she has long planned, the shortage of ministers has made it impossible to secure a successor for her so she goes on steadfastly until such time as she can be relieved. Available ministers like to stay farther east where there is more chance for fellowship and promotion.

"During the depression in the early '30's the subscription list was wiped out by the heavy losses sustained by many of the church people, so a regular budget seemed out of the question. To keep the church actively at work in this serious emergency Dr. Jones offered to go on as pastor, accepting just what was left from the available income after other expenses were cared for. This went on for twelve years, but the younger families that have been brought into the church in recent years have now taken hold of the business affairs of the church, are raising an adequate budget and training workers and officials in business ways, to make the work and the prospects of succeeding ministers more efficient and satisfactory.

"During recent years the church building, which had been growing shabby during the depression, was completely overhauled and renovated, making it one of the more attractive church buildings in the city. It is hoped to enlarge it when restrictions on building are removed after the end of the war. One of the happy events following this freshening and strengthening of the building was the dedication of the excellent organ, a gift to the congregation from Mrs. R. H. Woodworth and her daughter, Miss Phebe Woodworth, of Port Arthur, Texas. Mrs. Woodworth is a daughter of the Mr. and Mrs. Rome H. Woodworth who were active in the years when the foundations of the present vigorous organization were being laid. The organ is the Woodworth Memorial Organ, in memory of those pioneer Universalists to whom such a great debt is owed.

"Late this summer St. Paul's Universalist church plans to celebrate the 70th anniversary of its founding. While its history has not fulfilled the vast expectations of those who rocked its cradle, it has nevertheless made a large contribution to community welfare and quality, to the lives of the hundreds of people whose religious life has found within its walls their inspiration and has always contributed generously to denominational undertakings. What its future is to be will depend greatly on what shape the world is to take after the war ends. If liberal ministers are once more to be had in numbers large enough to meet the needs of their constituency, the next seventy years may be more useful than the first period.

"But whatever the future may bring, we are grateful for the light shed abroad into many lives by the ministrations of the fine succession of men and women who have spoken from its pulpit. More men and women than will ever be known have found through the messages from this pulpit an inspiration to worthier living that has affected not only those who were personally touched but all those whom their lives touched in turn share something of that insight which a true religion always imparts to those who will hear.

"It is therefore good to know what worthy work has been done in this first seventy years. It is worth while to plan for a yet more useful future and to contemplate with pride and affection those whose lives have enriched its history and been enriched by it."²⁵⁷

Out of the group of more than one hundred societies organized in Iowa in the past century only the four active parishes at Mitchellville, Mt. Pleasant, Waterloo, and Mitchellville remain^{ed} in 1943 as symbols of the reality of the ideal of religious liberalism as interpreted by the Universalist denomination. The twentieth century has been a period of serious loss. Twenty-five active or semi-active churches have disappeared. Few of the societies were ever large. Very frequently they represented one or two deeply interested leaders or family groups. The organization survived only for one generation or as long as the vibrant personality lived in that locality. Occasionally, a modest group of thirty or forty like-minded liberals were found in one town. There was built a church with real hopes for survival and the building of a truly liberal tradition. Such has been the story of the Mt. Pleasant church with ninety-five years of history. The influence of the Universalists on community life and thought has been in proportion to their sincerity, enthusiasm, courage and tenacity in avowing and the living the principles their minds and hearts accepted. On the whole they have been men of good will, who have inspired others to worthier endeavor. The part this denomination has played can never be objectively measured any more than the true worth of a man's life can be measured. Pioneer Universalists saw that it had a mission in the Iowa frontier. For a complete century succeeding generations have found it an inspiration, ennobling and enriching their lives.

Chapter VIII

THE GREAT SYNTHESIS

The Iowa Universalist Convention observed its centennial on December 23, 1943. One hundred years before at a meeting in the new church building in Iowa City delegates from Burlington, Muscatine, and Iowa City met and organized the State Convention. There had been Universalist preaching in Iowa since the 1830's and churches had been organized by the circuit riders prior to 1843. In the 1870's the movement reached its peak in both the number of churches organized and ministers serving in the Iowa field. Since that time there has been an interesting record of achievement in the building of modest stable churches. The number of parishes has gradually declined so that by 1943 there were only four active ones, namely those at Mitchellville, Mt. Pleasant, Waterloo, and Webster City. Within the century, however, it can be claimed that the denomination as a whole, as well as the individual ministers and laymen, has made an appreciable contribution to Iowa's social, political, and economic life.

The question in the minds of many thinking Iowa Universalists in this century has been, "Why has the denomination grown smaller with each passing decade?" Beginning in 1843 there was one society on record in Iowa City with the possibility that some others had been formed but not reported to the General Headquarters. Since that year one hundred twenty-six church groups have been fellowshipped with the

State Convention. In 1943 only four were considered active churches, and two of these had but small congregations. Many of the one hundred twenty-six so-called churches had consisted of very small societies, consisting perhaps of one, two or three like-minded liberal families who had come to Iowa from the East where they and their families were Universalists. Or they were attracted by one of the circuit riders or a minister of the liberal faith from a nearby community and became followers of the faith. In order to receive fellowship they simply needed to send delegates to one of the annual state conventions. Nevertheless many of the churches had been prosperous for a generation or more, then had vanished from the record. Notable examples would be Storm Lake, Strawberry Point, Elkader, Iowa Falls, Clarinda, Eldora, Newton, Waverly, Boone and Dubuque.

In the early days Iowa was settled by pioneers who cherished liberal views politically, socially, culturally and religiously. Many of them were abolitionists. They scorned class distinctions except those based on individual merit. They rejected false pretensions to culture that might have been accepted back east. Some were ready to embrace a philosophy or religion that appealed to their common sense and ideas of equality and fair play. Many of them had begun the trek westward dissatisfied with the economic, social or political conditions in their section. The frontier setting, with its absence of stabilization, would tend to make certain of them more liberal than they had been in an established community. People were coming in from all sections and

localities bringing a variety of ideas and customs into each Iowa community. This heterogeneity would tend to liberalize the new settlers. It was this element that accepted Universalism. Among these early groups, laymen and circuit riders exerted strong influence, yet more societies were established than were able to survive the more conservative migration of the succeeding decades. The liberals decreased in numbers in proportion to the population. As the first generation died, there were fewer new recruits to fill their vacant pews.

In this fact one can see clearly that the general denomination did not really plan for the Iowa expansion. It was rather a spontaneous response to the enthusiasm of a few devoted crusaders such as Erasmus Manford, Joy Bishop and Col. Sanford. Many small groups were organized in small communities, even in rural areas such as near Castalia, where there was no prospect of an expanding congregation under the best possible circumstances. Their efforts were expended many times in broadcasting the "good seed o'er the land" and having the scattered grains take root and flourish for a short time, then wither and die. The localities should perhaps have been chosen on the basis of whether they were likely to grow into a city of considerable size, for only there could they be sure to find a sufficient congregation to support a strong church. Only a few out of each thousand were likely to be, on the basis of averages, religious liberals.* Therefore

*However, all of the active churches in 1943 except one was in a relatively small community. The oldest one located at Mt. Pleasant is nearly a century old. Certain factors might tend to draw to one community an unusually large group of liberals in proportion to the total population.

choosing the site for a new church with care, and sending missionaries and funds to aid in its support, would have greatly aided the cause on the frontier. But the appeals for workers and money were sent to the denominational newspapers and the response depended very largely on the zeal of the local churches back east and of individual Universalists.

Besides a lack of planning and support from the General Convention there was neither organization nor supervision of the whole area for the perpetuation and encouragement of the societies when organized. The lack of fellowship and a shortage of ministers to serve the parishes were two of the reasons why the Waverly church closed, and when the property was sold the money was sent to the General Convention; not to the state organization. The Tri-State Superintendent, A. R. Tillinghast, in his report to the official board, September 29, 1909 wrote as follows:

"A few years ago, all villages looked much alike; since then some have shrivelled and others have suddenly become cities. Our churches were built by individuals and afterward [were] made a part of the denomination, thus were not located by general oversight or strategic plan. These scattered churches, having practically no denominational supervision became the easy prey of inefficient ministers, or were often closed because no leader came to their aid."¹

The men in the ministry were always too few for the demands made upon them. Many of the circuit riders were unusually capable men, who were so devoted to this cause that to them it had become a sacred crusade. Only a few lacked

¹ A. R. Tillinghast's report to the Executive Board, September 29, 1909.

the requisite mental and moral fiber for their profession. The liberals in the state demanded in their ministers intelligence, learning and ability far above the average because of the very nature of a philosophy which must be defended in public debate and private discussion. Circuits were formed to solve this problem. From the Executive Board's records in 1901 there appeared the following concerning them: "We approve the Superintendent's [A. R. Tillinghast] project of combining weak churches into circuits and trying to unite them under capable pastors. Regular services, though not frequent serve to keep a spark of faith alive."²

Early in the twentieth century nearly all of the churches seemed to feel that there was no use in continuing if they could not increase their membership sufficiently to support a resident minister. Mt. Pleasant discharged one pastor because he was living elsewhere and then for a time they were without a minister. Boone and Mitchellville long shared their pastor. When Dr. Cook was chosen to live in Mitchellville, Boone discontinued its cooperation. Mitchellville had never had a resident pastor since the Seminary had closed and was striving to strengthen itself so that it could become self-sufficient. Just when a circuit was to be revived that would include Bloomfield, that parish ceased to function.

The organization of the churches was of the free congregational type so that neither the state nor the General

²Iowa Universalist Convention, Executive Board Correspondence File for 1901.

Convention sent a new pastor as soon as the previous one departed. The churches were built and operated by the local individuals. A more centralized general organization that planned, supervised and nurtured the denomination's development would have strengthened the movement - but it would have met popular resistance within its own ranks. During the latter part of the nineteenth century and the early part of the twentieth there was either an Iowa or a Tri-State Superintendent, who counseled with the churches and tried to organize and perpetuate the work of the pioneers in the denomination, but the success of his labors was slight.

In organization and creed it was a religious democracy and had all the weaknesses and strengths of a political one. It was a religion based on feeling and reason that was intended to lead the intelligent in the paths of virtue, truth, right living, brotherhood and happiness. Each person was expected to find his own way and not depend on those in authority, nor on a creed to support and direct his religious life. In fact the independent pioneers were happy in such a free fellowship. However, when a group suffered under inefficient leadership or met a catastrophe there was no ecclesiastical authority that could step in to direct the affairs of their parish. - It was their problem and their responsibility and sometimes they failed to meet their crises successfully.

Judge Platt wrote in 1901 that he felt independence had weakened the church.

"Universalists either from natural causes or by reason of their education and environment, are independent in thought and action. The great danger the denomination is confronted with is too much independence on the part of its adherents or supporters. Liberty in thought, a liberal construction of Bible truths, too often leads to indifference--and sometimes to total lack of interest in the work of the church."³

In many cases the loss of the ardent first generation meant the end of the active society. Its children sometimes were more conservative by nature and environment or were influenced by the desire for fellowship, or the social approval accorded those in larger orthodox denominations, so they left their parent's church. In many cases the congregations were so small that young people married outside of the membership - this most often meant a loss especially when Lutherans or Catholics were involved. In some communities the influx of immigrants in large numbers from Ireland, Holland, Germany, or the Scandinavian countries has changed the character of the population and spelled the doom of a long-lived liberal church. Because of intermarriage or the authoritarian church member's repugnance to a change in religious conviction, the Universalists have been unable to replace the passing liberal members. Charles City and Osage are good examples of this type of situation. Many of the families who were originally Universalists were from the middle class: farmers, business and professional men. Their families were smaller than the average. In many cases there were no children. When there were they were sent to college where they chose a profession

³Judge F. C. Platt's report to the Iowa Executive Board, August 20, 1901.

or career that would take them to larger industrial communities in this state and elsewhere. Many people in the period from 1890 to 1920 moved to the urban centers for economic reasons. The churches, being primarily in the smaller towns in the state, seldom gained new members and frequently lost them. Storm Lake lost many to Sioux City and Mitchellville to Des Moines. In Eldora, Iowa Falls, Elkader, and Bloomfield the churches attributed their closing to removals to other localities.

Why they did not continue to draw new recruits into their ranks from the outside is a debatable issue. During the first forty years they did grow much more rapidly than at any other time. Perhaps it was because during that time they were crusading against the doctrine of endless punishment. That lent emotional appeal to their otherwise calm and reasonable statement of faith. It was during that phase that many of the religious debates were held, drawing large crowds and capable speakers. These resulted in the organization of new societies, as at Bloomfield and the reception of new members. When the controversy slowly died down perhaps the deeply liberal Universalists failed to recognize the need for the positive presentation of their philosophy. They were proud of their past record and grateful to God that other men in other churches were becoming more reasonable. Truly, other sects have grown continuously more liberal in practice although many of the creeds have remained unaltered. In the Page County History appears this explanation for the decline

of the Clarinda Parish:

"The church was exceedingly prosperous in its earlier days and would be equally so to-day were it not that the abandonment of the old dogmas of faith by the majority of orthodox churches renders their mission almost a thing of the past. The very grounds of the Universalist faith, with the single exception of the universal mediation of Christ, have become the principal tenets of faith held by the majority of orthodox congregation."⁴

But they erred in feeling that any other group had really espoused their cause of a free religion where all men were brothers seeking the wisdom of God in their own way. They failed to carry the torch of the reality of their faith to their neighbors and even to their own children. Perhaps some converts of the "Anti-hell days" did not sense the real mission of a liberal church and those involved in that struggle lost sight of the larger mission because of the noise of the fray on either hand. Having lost it once they forgot it or stumbled in their efforts to translate it to the succeeding generations.

They were a minority group, which many hoped would some day become a majority and permeate the religious thought of the nation. They, their children or their grandchildren, wearied of the social and economic discrimination which they encountered, and seeing few tangible gains made by the denomination, they gave up the struggle and sought the anonymous security of one of the larger established sects. They failed to realize that, as a thinking minority, they might have a larger influence on mankind than in a less positive group.

⁴History of Page County, Iowa, Des Moines, 1880, p. 564.

Perhaps the more loyal ones were inclined to charge the deserting members with having "sold their birthright for a mess of pottage." However, it was in a measure the inevitable wearing away of a minority by social attrition. Outright persecution would have been easier to endure; it is the fire that produces martyrs in any age. But slighting discriminations were harder to bear, especially if the people lacked the zeal, the understanding and the appreciation of the broader faith shown by their parents, who had felt that the qualities would come to their children as they grew up through study and meditation.

The Universalists were not the only denomination to lose members or close churches. This has been true of practically every denomination in Iowa. In practically every community there have been closed churches and others struggling to exist. In both Osage and Mt. Pleasant the Congregational Church has a large plant but a dwindling parish and recommendations have been made that they merge with the Universalists but no action has as yet been taken. The latter have been very reluctant to lose their identity in a fusion--always waiting until they must close their doors and sell their property. Never has there been a record in Iowa where Universalists voted as a society to join with another denomination. They have exemplified Patrick Henry's words, "Give me liberty or give me death." Perhaps they were prejudiced against other groups and not as liberal as they might have been, or thought they were, sacrificing the strength they might have gained and given in cooperation with these other faiths in favor of their

cherished freedom and independence.

Dr. Laura Bowman Galer who grew up in Boston, thinks that Universalism was more at home in the East than in Iowa because of certain psychological conditions. Adherents of this faith were as a rule "independent in thought, reserved in expression of ideals and emotions and somewhat resentful of interference in what they regarded as deeply personal affairs. The people of New England and New York were originally of this same nature - Wesley had little success in preaching there and Methodism is weak in New England to this day, though now strong in New York." Aimee McPherson was a sad failure when she tried to hold a revival in Boston. In the west, there were "many who had long been away from church life and from social conventions.- If caught by preaching it would be something novel and quite emotional with a background that" was reminiscent of "the old time religion of their forefathers."

Universalism began in the west "as an emotional reaction from the extreme revival preaching of hell-fire and died out rapidly when that kind of preaching subsided. Should the Nazarene type of evangelism become wide-spread in Iowa, there will again be a reaction but it will come in orthodox churches where a modified Universalism is already finding a place.

"Without emotional appeal, without novelty and without definite rules, the Universalist Church seems to have little that a hearty and somewhat materialistic people want in a religion."⁵

⁵Dr. Laura Bowman Galer, Mt. Pleasant, Iowa, to Elva Tucker, Waterloo, Iowa, April 1, 1944.

Out of all these factors which helped to bring about the decline in the number of parishes and members, which ones could have been eliminated? Many things were certainly beyond their control, such as the foreign immigration, the effect of social attrition on a minority group, the setting, the general decline in church membership, the lack of emotional appeal, removals of the population to larger centers and the liberalization of all denominations. Some things they could not have changed, for in so doing they would have violated basic convictions, such as changing from a democratic to an authoritarian organization, or the gradual liberalization of all denominations. Their greatest error lay in not emphasizing the positive interpretation of their religious philosophy and keeping it always in the foreground of their teaching within and without the church. Their children should have been so imbued with the reality of their liberal religion that nothing could possibly replace it in their lives. Perhaps this educational program on the part of the church and the home would have encouraged more young people to fill the ranks of the ministry and the pews of their churches. It would have been quite possible to improve the organization and supervision in the state and to have done it from pioneer times so that more material gains could have been conserved and expansion promoted. Very early sites for mission work should have been planned on the basis of the possibility of an adequately large community and sufficiently near other churches to share in fellowship and the support of a circuit if necessary.

Beyond a doubt the narrowness or prejudice of some "so-called" liberal Universalists against other liberals was a defect that could have been remedied and which in many localities might have increased the flock in the liberal parish, without changing the Universalist faith and precepts.

Hence it would seem that their decline may be attributed to both avoidable and unavoidable factors. The greatest regret they may have is that they did not meet adequately the problem of education. However, the story is not all one of regret. It is also one of proud accomplishment in and contribution to the culture in the commonwealth of Iowa. Nothing is dead which lives on in the lives of succeeding generations making their lives saner, fuller, and happier than they might have been.

The contributions of the Universalists to the life in Iowa were varied and many were quite intangible. They supplied some fine leadership and a loyal following for the social reforms of the century, such as women's rights, temperance and world-peace which have been discussed earlier, wherein Mary A. Livermore, Dr. Effie McCollum Jones, Herbert L. Stoughton, Uncle Tom Mitchell, and Dr. Kate Harpel were leaders. They sponsored educational and cultural agencies which benefited the people of this commonwealth, such as the Mitchell Academy at Mitchellville, Lombard College at Galesburg, Illinois, the libraries at Mt. Pleasant and Webster City, the public parks at Manchester and Webster City, the lectures, the book reviews and the extra activities of such notable ministers as Col. J. P. Sanford, Rev. B. F. Snook,

the Rev. Edna P. Bruner, Dr. Effie McCollum Jones, and Dr. Laura Bowman Galer; the social service rendered the needy of all religious faiths at home and abroad as exemplified by the work of the Mount Pleasant ladies' societies and the bequest of Dr. William Chamberlin which reached any community in Iowa where there was a Universalist or Unitarian church. This was one of the areas where every Universalist felt he could demonstrate to others his belief in the common brotherhood of all men. They supplied a disproportionately large number of upright, intelligent, cultured and capable citizens and leaders in the local communities. Lastly, but of tremendous importance, they introduced elements of liberalism into the other Protestant denominations and led in building a sincere tolerance among the citizens of this state.

In pioneer Iowa none suffered or sacrificed more for their convictions than the Universalists and few were earlier in the field. They bravely met persecution from the orthodox Christians when it was most unpopular to advocate liberty in religious thought and form. It was a struggle wherein man's intelligence and reason warred against the dogmas of medieval creeds. They combined transcendent moral courage with the fervor of the crusader.

The early days saw much persecution and discrimination against them, both as a denomination and as individuals. They were denied a meeting place, refused the right to own property, scorned as a heretical group. As the years passed much of the religious superstition and ignorance was dissipated by the forces of education, science and the liberal

religious thought. However, as late as 1909 Dr. F. J. Drake received a letter in response to his inquiry regarding a church property in Sheldon, Iowa, which reveals that not all of the inhabitants of the state were yet tolerant. I. N. McIntyre wrote

"No, I haven't the deed to the lot and I don't think it matters much who has it, for there are surely 'sects' enough in this city without a dream of thought sort! Why don't you people get in under cover of the teachings of God's word and not try to devise some easier way to get to Heaven, or perhaps to be 'popular' here on earth, for I can't find authority in the Plan of Salvation where you are promised 'popularity' on the other side---Take your bearings! You are away off your course."⁶

Dr. I. M. Atwood, General Secretary, read the above and wrote to Dr. Drake, "I am returning his valuable letter, with its words of warning to you, that you may have it for ready reference. There would appear to be some need of the preaching of Universalism in Iowa yet." Around 1880 the Universalist who wrote the account about the Clarinda church for the County history recorded that their church would still be prospering if it were "not that the abandonment of the old dogmas of faith by the majority of orthodox churches renders their mission almost a thing of the past."⁷ L. H. Henry wrote in 1943 "Nothing much is left of any of the Protestant churches that is distinctive excepting the names. There are no doctrinal sermons any more and a stranger would not know where he was. Even a Presbyterian preacher would hardly dare

⁶I. N. McIntyre, Sheldon, Iowa, to F. J. Drake, Webster City, Iowa, Dec. 1, 1909.

⁷History of Page County, Iowa, Des Moines, 1880, p. 564.

to preach foreordination, infant damnation, etc. It is all in the Creed but it is not preached."⁸

In the localities where there are Universalist churches they have been admitted into the religious fellowship of the city and the county. The ministers are members of the ministerial association, the churches cooperate in union services and other general Christian activities. Mrs. Ella Burleson says,

"Not only is there no longer open hostility toward our church but its principles have so permeated the other churches that some of the ministers and many of the members of their Congregations are as liberal as we are....No doubt that is one reason our church has not increased greatly in numbers....Because the people have not had to go seeking for the larger faith....It has come to them within their own organization. Truly may it be said of those who blazed the way 'their works do follow them.'"⁹

Mr. H. Roy Mosnat of Belle Plaine wrote "It seems to me that the Universalist churches like the Unitarian, were more of a leaven that broadened other churches rather than gaining any large membership or following of their own."¹⁰

The editor of the Manchester Press in 1943 wrote of the Universalist church and the Rev. Henry Gillespie. About seventy years ago

"the Universalist church in Manchester was a flourishing institution. Among its members it numbered several of the most prominent and well-to-do families in the village. Socially it held the place later pre-empted by the Congregational society. Nevertheless the Universalists....were looked upon by the other denomina-

⁸L. H. Henry, Charles City, Iowa to Elva Tucker, Cedar Falls, Iowa, May 15, 1943.

⁹Ella Burleson-Manuscript written in 1924.

¹⁰H. Roy Mosnat, Belle Plaine, Iowa to Elva Tucker, Cedar Falls, Iowa, May 6, 1943, (He was not a Universalist).

tions in town as a godless sect. That was because they didn't believe in hell or eternal punishment in a lake of brimstone and fire....

"It was considered scandalous by the Methodists, Baptists and even by the early Presbyterians and Congregationalists, that a religious organization should deny the existence of a literal hell, in the face of plain scriptural injunction, precept and example. The preaching of hell fire was an especial prerogative of the Methodists, with the Baptists not far behind in thundering denunciations upon the sinner and assuring him of an everlasting plunge into the seething satanic flames. The Universalists, however, stuck to their guns and consumed carloads of paper and mountains of sermons in defense of their belief. Gradually the rival denominations began to lose ground. Bishops and laymen, conferences and preachers, church publications and publicists began to edge away from the hell fire theme, until today it has no supporters save among isolated and struggling sects operating under a wide variety of names. We are referring, of course, to the Protestant denominations, as the Catholic church has remained steadfast to its own views of the hereafter.

"Thus Henry has found the theological training he received more than half a century ago upheld by modern religious practice and belief among the Protestant churches. The sinner is no longer exhorted to be good or go to hell. In fact, the use of the word 'hell' is considered not only profane but injudicious, and it has disappeared from the vocabulary of the pulpiter. Protestantism has embraced Universalism and what was once rejected has become the cornerstone of the structure. Henry's church is no longer in our midst, but dying it finds itself triumphant in a sectarian controversy which raged for a generation."¹¹

Ideas cherished by the Universalists other than their belief that a just and loving God would not condemn any of his children to an endless hell, have been accepted by other denominations, such as the principle that the Bible contains a revelation of truth that was God-given but discovered by man and revealed by him; that Jesus was a human being, but divine in his understanding of man and God, and

¹¹The Manchester Press, April 8, 1943.

his life and teachings were an inspiration and a guide in social living; that all men would be punished for all their wrong doing, either here or hereafter, and that the penalty would be proportionate to their errors; that truth was authoritative and continuously being discovered; that men of good will and sacrificial spirit would overcome evil and progressively establish the Kingdom of God; that each human personality was supremely important to God and to his fellow man.

Although many of these ideas were first cherished by this denomination, and have gradually permeated the religious thinking of other Christians, the orthodox creeds have not changed materially but the liberty clause of the Universalist avowal of faith marks it as a truly free and liberal church, with positive ideals, definite convictions and deep sincerity in which the inward faith and not the repetition of a formal creed is the reality.

Frank Throop wrote in 1938,

"I grew up in that church [Universalist], acquiring a love and veneration for a liberal Christianity, with the result that the spirit of tolerance and liberalism has been one of my chief characteristics....Denominations may not change their creeds, but the people of this country no matter at what church they worship have all adopted many of the principles of liberalism as exemplified in the Universalist church."¹²

How large a part this denomination has played in liberalizing the thinking of the Protestant branch of Christianity it is impossible to measure, because other factors such as science, and education in the march of progress con-

¹²Frank Throop, Publisher of The Lincoln Star, Lincoln, Nebr., to Miss Grace Roberts, Mt. Pleasant, Iowa, Nov. 19, 1938.

tributed toward reason and liberality in religious matters. However, the Universalists were the religious liberals who formed the vanguard for freedom, tolerance and reason among the Christians of Iowa. For each advance in civilization there have been those who caught the gleam, who suffered and sacrificed to share it with others. When it has become widely accepted the pioneers may be forgotten. Many people who never knew Universalists nor entered one of their churches have enjoyed or are enjoying the religious principles for which Universalists stood in the past and which guide them in the present. Their contribution to tolerance, freedom and reason in religion will endure in the lives of succeeding generations, making them saner and happier, more complete and satisfying, than they might otherwise have been. The church is not expanding as a separate movement in Iowa but it has permeated the religious thinking of practically all the people.

Professor Goldwin Smith, a noted scholar of England, the United States and Canada is reported to have declared that "The only important contribution to Christian life credited to America is the Universalist church. If it should disappear its influence would remain forever on the religious consciousness of humanity."¹³ Religious liberals outside that church probably would complain that the eminent historian had confined his judgment in too narrow a channel since the struggle to join reason to faith has not lacked champions in other

¹³Rev. W. E. Leavitt, Conover, Ohio, to Mrs. Sylva Wait, Mt. Pleasant, Iowa, June 5, 1924.

sects. Nevertheless, a point is made. And many Iowans will rejoice that the contribution of their pioneer forebearers to an end so worthy was both extensive and creditable.

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10. Griswold, W. H., Charles City, Iowa to S. J. Oldfield, Mitchellville, Iowa, March 23, 1907.
11. Harpel, L. V., Boone, Iowa to Dr. F. J. Drake, Webster City, Iowa, May 9, 1917.

In the hands of the State Historian of the Iowa Universalist Convention, Dr. Effie McCollum Jones, Webster City, Iowa.

12. The Henney Family to the Mitchellville Universalist Sunday School.
13. Leavitt, Rev. W. E., Conover, Ohio to Mrs. Sylvia Wait, Mt. Pleasant, Iowa, June 5, 1924.
14. McAchran, Mrs. Flora D., Bloomfield, Iowa to Dr. Effie McCollum Jones, Webster City, Iowa, July 9, 1930.
15. McIntyre, I. N., Sheldon, Iowa to Dr. F. J. Drake, Webster City, Iowa, December 1, 1909.
16. Montgomery, Jessie Griffith, Chicago, Illinois, to someone in the Mt. Pleasant Universalist Church, November 21, 1938.
17. Palmer, Leroy, Washington, D. C., to Mrs. Sylvia Wait, Mt. Pleasant, Iowa, June 19, 1924.
18. Palmer, Leroy, Washington, D. C., to Miss Josephine Leedham, Mt. Pleasant, Iowa at the time of an anniversary celebration (undated)
19. Platt, Judge F. C., Waterloo, Iowa, report to the Executive Board of the Iowa Universalist Convention, August 20, 1901.
20. Platt, Franklin J., Waterloo, Iowa to S. J. Oldfield, Mitchellville, Iowa, October 12, 1909.
21. Stoughton, Mrs. Elizabeth, Osage, Iowa to Dr. Effie McCollum Jones, Webster City, Iowa, January 23, 1936.
22. Stoughton, Herbert L., Osage, Iowa to Dr. Effie McCollum Jones, Webster City, Iowa, August 17, 1908.
23. Stoughton, Herbert L., Osage, Iowa to S. J. Oldfield, Mitchellville, Iowa, April 9, 1913.
24. Stoughton, Herbert L., Osage, Iowa to C. N. Jenkins, Cedar Rapids, Iowa, July 18, 1918, and July 26, 1918.
25. Smith, Rev. W. P., Osage, Iowa to the Secretary of the State, Des Moines, Iowa, June 25, 1870.
26. Throop, Frank, (Publisher of the Lincoln Star) Lincoln, Nebraska, to Miss Grace Roberts, Mt. Pleasant, Iowa, November 19, 1938.
27. Tillinghast, Rev. A. R., Tri-State Superintendent, reported to the Executive Board of the Iowa Universalist Convention, September 29, 1909.

28. Van Vechten, C. D., Cedar Rapids, Iowa, to Herbert L. Stoughton, Osage, Iowa, May 1, 1917.
29. Wait, Emma, to Mrs. Fred Wait in 1923.
30. Whitesmith, Rev. Ernest, Mitchellville, Iowa to Dr. Effie McCollum Jones, Webster City, Iowa, October 1, 1938.

Personal Correspondence

1. Allen, Mrs. Ward M. (Fanny), Ossian, Iowa, May 16, 1943.
2. Barker, Olive, Clinton, Iowa, July, 1943.
3. Burton, Helen L., Cedar Rapids, Iowa, April 16, 1943.
4. Colegrove, Rev., O. G., Stockton, Illinois, February 16, 1944.
5. Flenniken, Mrs. Mary, Strawberry Point, Iowa, May 4, 1943.
6. Foster, Frank, Iowa Falls, Iowa, April 8, 1943.
7. Galer, Laura Bowman, D.D., Mt. Pleasant, Iowa, January 14, 1944.
8. Gillespie, Rev. Henry L. F., Manchester, Iowa, Sunday 25, 1943, and another undated one in 1943.
9. Henry, L. H., Charles City, Iowa, May 15, 1943.
10. Kenney, Mrs. Elizabeth, McAllen, Texas, February 12, 1944.
11. Milner, Mrs. O. A., Red Oak, Iowa, 1943.
12. Morse, Mrs. N. C. Dr., Eldora, Iowa, May 12, 1943.
13. Mosnat, H. Roy, Belle Plaine, Iowa, May 6, 1943.
14. Traer, J. F., Vinton, Iowa, February 8, 1944.
15. Ripley, Mrs. H. R., Tipton, Iowa, 1943.
16. Tyler, Grant, Eldora, Iowa, April 12, 1943.

Interviews

1. Beall, Walter, West Union, Iowa, July, 1943.
2. Camp, Frank, West Union, Iowa, July, 1943.
3. Curtis, Milly, Waverly, Iowa, 1943. (Assisted his grandfather H. H. Couse, the carpenter who erected the Universalist Church)
4. Galer, Laura Bowman, D.D., Mt. Pleasant, Iowa, August, 1943.
5. Harpel, Kate, M.D., Boone, Iowa, July, 1943.
6. Hering, Louise, Charles City, Iowa, 1943.
7. Hitchcock, Rev. Jennie Bartholomew, Osage, Iowa, July 1943.
8. Kenny, Mrs. Elizabeth, Waterloo, Iowa, 1943.
9. Mann, Mr. and Mrs. E. N., Boone, Iowa, July, 1943.
10. Mason, Mrs. Charlotte, Mitchellville, Iowa, 1943.
11. Neudeck, Mrs. Gertrude, Webster City, Iowa, 1943.
12. Pierce, Mrs. F. D., Cedar Falls, Iowa, 1943.
13. Rasmussen, Mrs. Opal, Cedar Falls, Iowa, 1943.
14. Tucker, H. B., Long Beach, California.
15. Willits, Mrs. Edith, Mt. Pleasant, Iowa, July, 1943.

Program of the Dedication of the First Universalist Church,
Boone, Iowa

Year Books

1. Universalist Companion, Boston, Universalist Publishing Co. 1843-1859.
2. Universalist Companion and Almanac, Boston, Universalist Publishing Co., 1853, 1863.
3. Universalist Companion and Universalist Register, Boston, Universalist Publishing Co., 1863-1870.
4. Universalist Register and Almanac, Boston, Universalist Publishing Co., 1873, 1874, 1879, 1880, 1884, 1885, 1889, 1890, 1891, 1893, 1895, 1896, 1900, 1904, 1910, 1911, 1912, 1913, 1922, 1933, 1940, 1923.

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Books

1. Briggs, John Ely, Iowa Old and New, New York, University Publishing Co., 1939.
2. Carpenter, George T.; Hughes, John; Waring, E. H., Debate on the Destiny of the Wicked, St. Louis, Christian Publishing Co., 1888.
3. Eddy, Richard, D.D., "History of Universalism," American Church History, V. 10, New York, Charles Scribner and Son. 1890.
4. Federated Women's Clubs of the County, A Pioneer History of Davis County, Bloomfield, The Bloomfield Democrat, 1927.
5. Harlan, Edgar Rubey, A Narrative History of the People of Iowa, Chicago, and New York, The American Historical Society, Inc., 1931, V.2.
6. Manford, Erasmus, Twenty-five Years in the West, Chicago, Erasmus Manford Pub. Co., 1867.
7. Shambaugh, Benjamin F., Iowa City a Contribution to the Early History of Iowa, Iowa City, State Historical Society, 1893.
8. Venable, William Henry, The Beginnings of Literary Culture in the Ohio Valley, Cincinnati, Clarke Pub. Co., 1891.

Pamphlets

1. Aldrich, Charles, Kendall Young and the Kendall Young Library.
2. Ballou, Rev.. J. H., Thanksgiving Service, 1873.
3. Cole, Rev. W. R., Lombard Day.
4. Earle, Rev. Gertrude A., The Beginnings of the Universalist Church, Rev., Boston, Universalist Publishing House, 1940.
5. Perkins, Frederick William, Beliefs Commonly Held Among Us, Boston, Universalist Publishing House, 1940.

County Histories

1. History of Benton County, Iowa, Chicago, Western Historical Co., 1878.
2. Portrait and Biographical Album of Benton County, Iowa, Chicago, Chapman Bros., 1887.
3. History of Black Hawk County, Iowa, Chicago, S. J. Clarke Publishing Co., 1915, Vol. 1.
4. Melendy, Peter, Historical Record of Cedar Falls, Cedar Falls, Peter Melendy, 1893.
5. Goldthwait, N. E., History of Boone County, Iowa, Chicago, Pioneer Publishing Co., 1914, Vol. 2.
6. History of Cedar County, Iowa, Chicago, Western Historical Co., 1878.
7. History of Clayton County, Iowa, Chicago, Interstate Publishing Co., 1882.
8. History of Clinton County, Iowa, Chicago, Western Historical Society, 1879.
9. History of Dallas County, Iowa, Des Moines, Union Historical Co., 1879.
10. Federated Women's Clubs of the County, A Pioneer History of Davis County, Bloomfield, The Bloomfield Democrat, 1927.
11. History of Davis County, Iowa, Des Moines, State Historical Co., 1882.
12. History of Delaware County, Iowa, Chicago, Western Historical Co., 1878.
13. History of Delaware County, Iowa, Chicago, The S. J. Clarke Publishing Co., 1914, Vol. 2.
14. History of Dubuque County, Iowa, Chicago, Western Historical Co., 1880.
15. Oldt, Franklin T., History of Dubuque County, Iowa, Chicago, Goodspeed Historical Association, 1911.
16. History of Hardin County, Iowa, Springfield, Union Publishing Co., 1883.
17. History of Henry County, Iowa, Chicago, Western Historical Co., 1879.

18. History of Jasper County, Iowa, Chicago, Western Historical Co., 1878.
19. History of Jasper County, Iowa, (James B. Weaver, Editor-in-chief) Indianapolis, B. F. Bowen and Co., 1912.
20. History of Johnson County, Iowa, Iowa City (no publisher or author given) 1883.
21. History of Kossuth County, Iowa, Chicago, The S. J. Clarke Publishing Co., 1913.
22. History of Mahaska County, Iowa, Des Moines, Union Publishing Co., 1878.
23. History of Marion County, Iowa, Chicago, The S. J. Clarke Publishing Co., 1915.
24. Mattin, Judge William, and Moscrip, F. A., Past and Present of Marshall County, Iowa, Indianapolis, B. F. Bowen and Co., 1912, Vol. 1.
25. Sanford, Mrs. Nettie, History of Marshall County, Clinton, Leslie McAllaster and Co., 1867.
26. Biographical History of Page County, Iowa, Chicago, Lewis and Dunbar, 1890.
27. History of Page County, Iowa, Des Moines, Iowa Historical Co., 1880.
28. History of Polk County, Iowa, Des Moines, Baker-Trisler Co., 1908.
29. Parker, L. F., History of Poweshiek County, Iowa, Chicago, The S. J. Clarke Publishing Co., 1911.
30. History of Story County, Iowa, Chicago, The S. J. Clarke Publishing Co., 1911, Vol. 2.
31. History of Taylor County, Iowa, Des Moines, The State Historical Co., 1881.
32. History of Van Buren County, Iowa, Chicago, Western Historical Co., 1878.

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2. Clarke, George W., "Bygone Days in Drakeville," Annals of Iowa, (3), V. 14, 1923-1925, pp. 343-345.
3. Garretson, O. A., "Pilot Grove", The Palimpsest, V. 3, 1922, p. 396.
4. Harlan, Edgar R., "Notable Deaths," Annals of Iowa, (3) V. 12, 1915-1921, p. 383; V. 14, 1923-1925, p. 159; V. 15, 1925-1927, p. 555.
5. Herriot, Frank I., "Whence Came the Pioneers," Annals of Iowa, (3) V. 7, April 1906, pp. 357-378; July 1906, pp. 446-465.
6. Irish, Capt., F. M., "History of Johnson County," Annals of Iowa, V. 4., October 1868.
7. Jordan, Phillip D., "The Salter-Shackford Correspondence," Annals of Iowa, (3) V. 18, 1931-1933, pp. 412-419.
8. Jordan, Phillip D., "William Salter's - My Ministry in Iowa," Annals of Iowa, (3) V. 24, January 1943, pp. 1-179.
9. Macbride, Thomas H., "The College of the Pioneers," The Palimpsest, V. 16, 1935, pp. 177-178.
10. Ogburn, Carl, "Pioneer Religious Revival," Annals of Iowa, (3), V. 15, 1925-1927, pp. 488-504.
11. Peterson, William J., "Religion and Morality," Palimpsest, V. 19, 1938, pp. 218-221.
12. Preston, Ruth Irish, "The Universalist Church of Iowa City," Old and New, Des Moines, Iowa, V. 17, January 1908, pp. 3-7.
13. Taylor, Hawkins, "Squatters and Speculators at the First Land Sale," Annals of Iowa, V. 9, 1871, p. 271.
14. Thornton, Harrison, John, "The National Scene," The Palimpsest, V. 14, 1933, pp. 50-51.
15. Whitcomb, Mary R., "Abner Kneeland," Annals of Iowa, V. 6 1903-1904, pp. 209-211.

Newspapers

1. The Argo (West Union)
 - September 21, 1881
 - September 26, 1883
 - May 21, December 17, 1884
 - March 23, June 1, August 10, December 14, 1887
 - December 19, 1888
 - June 30, July 10, October 2, 1889
 - October 17, November 8, 1893
 - May 16, June 6, 1894 - November 16, 1898
 - March 7, 1900 - May 13, 1908
 - October 3, 1900
 - July 22, 1908 - July 7, 1909
 - January 26, 1910
2. Boone County Democrat
 - March 30, 1881
3. Boone Standard
 - October 14, 1882
 - November 15, 1884
 - June 6, May 23, May 30, 1885
 - April 10, 1886 - April 1, 1893
 - August 29, 1891
 - July 29, 1893
 - March 25, May 6, September 23, 1899
4. Cedar Rapids Standard,
 - November 29, 1888
 - November 28, December 19, 1878
5. Clarinda Herald
 - June 28, 1893 - October 20, 1893
 - January 5, 9, 19, 1894
 - March 15 and 26, October 15, 1895
 - March 4, 1897
 - June 28, 1898 - January 4, 1901
6. Davis County Republican (Bloomfield)
 - 1873 - 1888
 - June 21, 1888
 - December 17, 1874
 - December 23, 1875
7. Des Moines Register, a clipping from one of the 1894 issues.
8. Dubuque Daily Herald
 - November 19, 1872
 - January 3, 1873
 - May 26, 27, September 21, 1883
 - June 29, 1892
 - January 15, 1893-1900

9. Eldora Herald,
 - October 10, December 16, 1873
 - February 24, March 10, May 27, September 2-9, December 2, 1874
 - October 20, November 10, 1875
 - May 8, 1876
 - June 28 - November 8, 1876
 - March 7, 17, May 9, 1877
 - January 30, October 23, 1878
 - June 2, 1880 - September 6, 1888
 - March 8, 15, April 19, 1889
 - August 16, 1889 - November 1893
 - January 18, 1894
 - January 3 - February 21, 1895
 - March 18, 1898 - August 19, 1899
 - December 9, 1899

10. Iowa Falls Sentinel,
 - February 2, March 9, April 6, August 23, June 29, August 17, September 21, 1892
 - August 23, 1893
 - January 24, February 7, 1894
 - September 25, 1895
 - September 23, 1896
 - January 20, April 24, 1897
 - August 24, 1898
 - February 21, 1900 - December 31, 1901
 - February 21, 1905

11. Iowa Odd Fellow (Maxwell),
 - November 1, 1903

12. Iowa Press (Iowa City)
 - January 13, 1873
 - September 28, 1933

13. Iowa Times Republican (Marshalltown)
 - July 19, 27, September 14, 1893
 - March 6 - June 30, 1896
 - January 22, 1909

14. Manchester Press,
 - April 8, 1943

15. Manford's Monthly Magazine (Chicago and St. Louis)
 - September, 1871
 - October, 1866
 - August, 1866

16. Marshall County Advance, (Marshalltown)
 - May 14, 21, June 11, August 20, November 5, 1867
 - February 4, June 2, 1868

17. Marshalltown Weekly Times Republican,
December 2, 1886
18. Marshalltown Republican,
July 26, 1877
19. Marshalltown Times Republican,
October 25, 1883
March 27, 1884
May 22, 1888
February 20, April 10, 1890
20. Marshalltown Weekly Republican,
October 29, 1879 - February 4, 1880
February 11, 18, 25, March 17, 1880
August 6, 1885
21. Mitchell County Press (Osage),
December 30, 1897
June 29, October 5, December 7, 1899
22. Mitchellville Index,
September 15, October 6, October 13,
1926.
23. The New Covenant (Chicago),
March 4, February 28, 1871
24. Star in the West (Cincinnati),
April 17, May 15, June 5, 19, July 10,
August 28, October 23, November 13,
20, December 11, 18, 1841
March 5, 1842
25. Storm Lake Pilot,
May 24, 1870
April 28, November 24, December 22, 1875
February 2, 16, June 28 - July 12, Dec-
ember 27, May 17, 1876
April 30, June 18, August 16, October
30, December 10, 1879
January 14, March 31, November 3, 1880
June 22, August 31, 1882
February 23, March 1, 1883
May 3, 1883 - May 21, 1885
December 26, 1886 - March 2, 1900
26. Universalist Leader (Boston)
February 20, 1909
March 11, 1922
27. Waterloo Courier,
January 31, April 11, May 23, 1866
May 20, November 7, 1867
October 7, 1869

28. Waverly Democrat,
March 19, 1880
29. Waverly Republican,
May 10, June 23, November 10, December
15, 22, 29, 1870
February 23 - April 27, June 8, 1871
May 9, 1872
October 2, 1873
June 8, 1876
September 21 - October 26, 1876
February 8-22, May 10, 1877
August 1, 1878
April 3, 1879
30. Webster City Daily News,
June 16, 1924
31. Webster City Freeman,
October 26, 1898
32. Webster City Observer,
June 25, 1942

Clippings

1. From a Boone newspaper dated September 2, 1934.
2. From an Osage newspaper in December, 1922.

APPENDIX

Iowa City, Nov. 17, 1841

"Bro. Gurley; - We have some good news, and hope to have more. There is now a good prospect of having our difficulties amicably settled in regard to our church lot, and leave us in peaceable possession of the lot. Not, however, until the Presbyterians have had a trial at our court, and have got defeated. They gave notice that they would appeal it to the Supreme Court. --- This I think they will not do; and it is now in a train of adjudication which I hope will be effective. If so, I will let you know, and I hope you will rejoice with us. It is the most beautiful lot in this growing city, I am satisfied that, could it now be sold, it would bring at least \$1,500. It is on a corner, only one block from the state house square, and contains about a half acre of ground, sufficient for our church, a school house and a parsonage. For this lot we have indeed had to contend strenuously, but I think our warfare is about over, unless they get into another fit of holy indignation at our heresy. This, then, will give us a deed in fee simple, provided we, before the thirty-first of July, 1843, build, which we shall attempt again next summer. Br. Foster says, "Tell Br. Gurley that he must procure for us shingles to cover it, and nails to put them on with; and he can do it if he has a mind to." It will take 16,000. How important it is for this work, and we must have assistance from abroad. I have spent nearly two years in this work without hardly a dollar, certainly not ten, for my services or for the support of my family, and cannot I ask our friends from abroad to do a little to assist us?

"I have struggled hard-darkness has reigned around us -- but, thank God, the light begins to dawn; our society is respectable in both numbers and moral worth. Since our formation our number has increased by six, and more coming. Mark my word; on the first day of the year 1842, we will number thirty members; yes, thirty. We shall apply for an act of incorporation at the next session of the Legislature, which will commence in two weeks.

"Bro. Foster's family is a fine accession to our cause. Also Br. Baker's from Bloomington, Ill., ... you know him. Our prospects are indeed good....

"I am in haste... you will receive my own and Mrs. Gardner's best wishes for you and yours,

"In Gospel faith, affectionately thine,

A. R. Gardner."

The Star in the West(Cincinnati)Dec. 11, 1841

CHARTER MEMBERS OF THE IOWA UNIVERSALIST CHURCHES

Bentonsport

Henry Clay Clinton
H. F. Greef

William Quaintance

Bloomfield

Mr. and Mrs. Asa Willson
Mr. and Mrs. Israel Kister
Mr. and Mrs. Jacob R. Shaffer
Mr. and Mrs. William McAchran
J. D. Hamilton
George W. Fletcher
H. G. W. Spencer
Mr. and Mrs. John Wilkinson

Molly Findley
Henry Nutton
Belle Nutton*
Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Davids
Mr. and Mrs. J. W. Clayton
Col. and Mrs. S. A. Moore*
Mr. and Mrs. Henry Milton *

Boone

L. J. Orr
A. B. Holcomb
Mr. and Mrs. George Wilmot
Mr. and Mrs. J. A. Head
Mr. and Mrs. H. B. Minier
Mr. and Mrs. J. C. Kennedy
Mr. and Mrs. A. P. Fogg
J. P. Tillson
C. Schoonover

H. H. Sprague
Mr. and Mrs. A. Nellis
Mr. and Mrs. H. L. Farr
J. R. Crary
J. M. Smith
E. Smith
E. Schoonover
H. Goddard
Mr. and Mrs. William Harman**

Castalia

Mr. and Mrs. Nathan Peckham

Some of the following families may have been charter members also.

Mr. and Mrs. A. W. Harvey
Mr. and Mrs. Anderson
Mr. and Mrs. Knight
Mr. and Mrs. Vance

Mr. and Mrs. Clark
Mr. and Mrs. Richard
Mr. and Mrs. Cornell

*History of Davis County, Iowa, Des Moines, 1882, p. 575.

**N. E. Goldthwait, History of Boone County, Iowa, Chicago 1914, p. 466.

Cedar Rapids

Mr. and Mrs. F. D. Rollins	H. E. Upton
A. B. Everett	H. J. Smith
L. E. Jenkins	George H. Nicholas
A. G. Plumb	Mrs. J. Bates
Mr. and Mrs. Al A. Jacobs	Mrs. M. L. Parhurst
Mrs. Louisa M. Plumb	James Bates
F. J. Upton	Lottie A. Brubaker
Amasa Mann	G. W. Waldron
C. W. Burton	O. L. Bolling
E. Bliss	Mrs. George Nicholas*
L. W. Nicholas	

Cedar Falls

Some of the following may have been charter members.

S. A. Bishop	Ida Overman
H. B. Gilkey	Dr. and Mrs. Pierce
Herbert Godfrey**	Mrs. Butterworth
George Leland	V. W. Foote
Mrs. Akin	Mr. and Mrs. John Jeffers
Mrs. Lillian Bowman	Harry Pierce
	Henry Leland

**

Charles City

Mr. and Mrs. John Owen

Other members, some whom may have been charter members.

Emma Sylvester	Mr. and Mrs. Josiah Billings
E. J. Fisher	Mrs. W. C. Hering
Dr. Bishop	Mrs. L. H. Henry
Mr. and Mrs. Clayton Henry	Mrs. Goddard
Mr. and Mrs. Daly	Mrs. Reka Cole
Clara Daly	Mr. and Mrs. Sam Sloan
Agnes Daly	Mr. and Mrs. Woodhouse
Mr. and Mrs. Julius Sterns	Mr. and Mrs. Hildreth
Mr. and Mrs. Black	Mrs. Slaughter
Mrs. Barney	Mrs. Lindeman
Mrs. McCaller	Mrs. Behrens and daughters
Mr. and Mrs. Griswold	Mathilda, Eda and Clara
Mrs. Lew Landers***	

*W. A. W. Argow, An Historical Sketch of the People's Church, pamphlet.

**Iowa Universalist Convention, President's Notebook.

***Conversation with Louise Hering, Charles City.

Clarinda

Job Loy
A. Loy
Sally Pfander
Charles Pfander
Sarah Pfander
Catherine Loy, Sr.

Albert Heald
Jacob Loy
Henry Loy
William Loy
Rachel Loy
Catherine Loy, Jr.*

*History of Page County, Iowa, Des Moines, 1880, p. 564.

Dubuque

Dr. Timothy Mason	C. H. Wright
C. H. McArthur	Mrs. E. S. Wright
L. D. Randall	Marcia Longhurst
W. S. Couch	Orason Chamberlain
D. K. Comwell	Mrs. Lucinda Chamberlain
J. S. Dennis	Annie G. Lewis
W. Longhurst	S. M. Russell
A. A. Edgerton	D. S. Cummings
Mrs. S. P. Edgerton	L. A. Cummings
C. J. Cummings	Mr. and Mrs. G. L. Mathews
Mrs. F. S. Cummings	Jeanette Brown
John C. Howell	M. A. Brown
Jerry Mahaney	

% *

%
First Universalist Church of Dubuque, Iowa, an historical sketch in the hands of Dr. Effie McCollum Jones, Webster City, Iowa.

*The liberal society known as "The Society for Christian Progress" organized two weeks before the Universalist was a composite group, primarily Unitarian and Universalist - the charter membership was composed of:

William S. Couch	W. J. Williams
Timothy Mason	E. T. Plympton
Arthur McArthur	J. Russ
B. S. Downer	A. J. Pease
J. S. Hooper	Longhurst
J. Buck	J. E. Robinson
L. D. Randall	B. Coffin
F. L. Mathews	P. D. Hosford
O. Chamberlain	J. B. Lane
C. J. Richards	W. P. Allen
Charles McArthur	T. P. Mellen
C. J. Cummings	W. E. Minot
D. S. Cummings	A. A. Edgerton
J. L. Stevens, Jr.	E. Harwood
L. K. Bowdish	J. H. Morse
George A. Blanchard	J. C. Howell**
George A. Clark	

**Dubuque Daily Herald, May 26, 1883.

Eldora

A. Wiley McDonald
Dr. King

Jonathan Edgington
Mrs. Dr. N. C. Morse

The following were known to be members, but whether they were charter members is uncertain.

Thomas Lytle
Mrs. I. N. Hunter
Mrs. Allena D. Ward
Mrs. W. J. Brooks
Mr. and Mrs. W. R. Schofield

Mrs. Eva French
Mrs. John Snyder
Mrs. T. G. Copp
Deroy Ellsworth
J. D. Thompson*

Greeley

C. S. Taylor
L. H. (J.) Keyes
J. S. Drybread
W. D. Jenkins
T. J. Armstrong

Lemuel Parker
Joseph Vaughn
J. M. Jenkins
J. Baker

Other members - (some of them might have been charter members.)

G. W. Parker
Mrs. Laura Vaughn
Miss Kittie Ellis
Miss Ella Ellis
Mrs. R. J. Jones
Mrs. Lucy Armstrong
Mrs. Duane Jenkins

Mrs. Matt Jenkins
Jerome Baker
Miss Ruth Jenkins
Fred Hilsenbeck
Mrs. Maud Baker
N. Glasscock
Mrs. L. Parker**

*Brief History of the First Universalist Society of Eldora, Iowa (ms.) deposited with the historian, Dr. Effie McCollum Jones, Webster City, Iowa.

**Brief History of the Universalist Church, Greeley, Iowa, (ms.) in hands of Dr. Effie McCollum Jones, Webster City, Iowa.

Iowa Falls

Mrs. Sarah M. Estes

Many of the following may have been charter members.

J. H. Funk	E. F. Newell
W. L. Hay	G. L. Whinery
Dr. J. W. Angell	Charles Packard
Mrs. J. H. Foster	O. P. Lane
Dr. J. H. Foster	Walter Carpenter
Frank Foster	George M. Tower
Fayette Holmes	Allan Ivans
R. A. Feist	L. P. Jones
George Wilson	Levi Allinson
J. M. Rinehart	Charles Foote*

Iowa City

A. R. Gardner	Amanda Foster
Edward Foster	Elizabeth M. Foster
Benjamin Weiser	Elizabeth Weiser
Warren Stiles	Harriet M. Gardner
Jeremiah Greenman	Mary Baker
Nathaniel McClure	Adaline Greenman
Daniel Hess	Rosella Andrews
Robert Walker	Vienna V. Winchester
Franklin Kimball	Atavela Winchester
C. C. Winchester	Eleanor Walker
H. H. Winchester	Jane Robinson
William P. Doty	Mrs. Gregg
Asa Gregg	Margaret Libby
James Robinson	Augusta J. Chapin**
C. C. Sangster	

Grinnell

Mr. and Mrs. Abraham Goodrich	Mrs. Mary Johnson
Mr. and Mrs. L. G. C. Pierce	Mrs. Reed
Mr. and Mrs. Jerry Miller	Mrs. Mary E. Beatty
Dr. and Mrs. E. H. Harris	Mr. and Mrs. P. Baldwin***

*Frank Foster, Iowa Falls, Iowa to Elva Tucker, Cedar Falls, Iowa, April 8, 1943.

**History of the Iowa City Church, (ms.) Iowa Historical Library.

***Sketch of the Universalist Church, Grinnell, Iowa, (ms.) deposited with Dr. Effie McCollum Jones, Webster City, Iowa.

Manchester

June 20, 1868 - 50 people signed their names to the constitution but that list is not recorded.

1869 - active members were:

Clark Bliss, Sr.	(
Thomas Toogood	(
H. M. Congar	(
A. M. Sherwood	(
E. M. Tomlinson	(incorporators in 1869
E. R. Congar	(
L. S. Bemis	(
E. Hoag	(

Gilbert Yeoman	R. G. Clifford
Hiram Babcock	J. Gilbert
Jacob Hoag	R. W. Tirrill
T. Crosby	N. Denton
E. J. Congar	James P. Robertson*

Charter members when the church was reorganized June 24, 1877 were:

R. W. Tirrill	Mary Hoag
E. J. W. Tirrill	C. L. Conger
Seth Brown	Lizzie Campbell
Hattie Brown	Carrie Sabin
A. W. Stevens	Mary Robinson
Mrs. A. W. Stevens	Mary Ford
Adoline Tomlinson	Mary Covey

No date given for the following which may be included with the above since the first accessions were made in July.

James B. Robertson	Mary DuBois
Mrs. J. B. Robertson	Sarah Gillespie
Clara Robertson	Gertrude DuBois**
John DuBois	

*History of Delaware County, Iowa, Chicago, 1878, p. 503.

**First Universalist Church, Manchester Iowa, Secretary's Record.

Marshalltown

Henry D. Hartwell	J. D. McCord
T. E. McCracken	J. A. Kelly
J. H. Heighten	H. Willard
Wells S. Rice	John W. Street*

(there were doubtless others but the records are missing)

Mitchellville

Thomas Mitchell	M. H. Murray
E. B. (Barbara) Stall	Mamie Weeks
Tillie Mitchell	Robert Patterson
William S. Jones	Elizabeth Patterson
Amos Rothrock	E. H. Cram
Pauline Weeks**	I. C. Barrett
Robert Ball	S. S. Moore
Carrie Mitchell	Ellen Moore
Tille R. Andrews	A. M. Glazier
Bettie H. Moore	M. L. Aiken
Elmore Chase	A. Vedder
M. E. Chase	N. W. Cram***

*Judge William Battin and F. A. Mostrip, Past and Present of Marshall County, Iowa, Indianapolis, 1912, Vol. 1, p. 348.

**First Universalist Church, Mitchellville, Polk County, Iowa, Clerk's Record.

***Mitchellville Index, September 15, 1926.

Mount Pleasant

Amon Lapham
 Reuben Allen
 Charles S. Clarke
 Schuyler Corbin
 John Cray
 Elijah Smith
 Richard Gelatt
 B. F. Pixley
 I. S. Cassidy
 Solon Yeoman
 Catharine C. Rodgers
 Mary W. Corbin
 Lucy R. S. Edwards
 Clarissa Corbin
 Mary Disbrow
 Eliza Gelatt
 Emily Gillis
 Caroline C. Gelatt
 Clarissa Craig
 Marth M. Wills
 Lydia B. Pixley
 Sarah S. Clarke

M. L. Edwards
 I. Pulsifer
 Joseph Rodgers
 John G. Sanderson
 Franics McCrary
 S. E. Bereman
 Joseph Guard
 William R. Cole
 Thomas A. Bereman
 William D. Leedham
 James W. Cole
 Jacob S. Douglas
 William B. Linell
 Caroline H. Clarke
 Eliza Fan
 Delilah Cole
 Cordelia T. Cole
 Elmira A. Herrick
 Joseph S. Riggs
 John Martin
 Lydia Ann Shaw
 Celia (Celicia) Linnell*

Newton

Charter members are unknown. Principal members were the families of:

Albert Lufkin
 David, Obed and Oran Drew

R. J. Hardisty

Storm Lake

Mr. and Mrs. M. D. Watkins
 Mr. and Mrs. James Harker
 Mr. and Mrs. William Guilford
 Mr. and Mrs. S. W. Hobbs
 James F. Toy
 Mary E. Toy
 J. A. Dean
 Augusta C. Dean
 Henry Holcomb
 S. C. Holcomb

George Currier
 Adelia Currier
 G. S. Robinson
 D. L. Hurd
 Ellen S. W. Dean
 Mrs. E. A. Moore
 Jennie E. Watkins
 W. E. Brown
 Mrs. J. W. Grable**

*First Universalist Church, Mt. Pleasant, Iowa, Secretary's Record, Vol. 1, p. 3.

**Storm Lake Pilot, Feb. 23, 1881.

Osage

Pascal Whitney
 Margaret P. Prime
 H. L. Knowlton
 Julia T. Knowlton
 Thomas O. Brown
 Ella R. Brown
 Mathilda Hitchcock
 George M. Stoughton
 C. Stoughton
 Louisa Goodspeed
 Loretta M. Demary
 Charles Sweeney
 Annie E. Sweeney

Alden Flint
 Mary J. Cutler
 E. E. Gallup
 Martha Whitaker
 Annie Ballett
 Chloe S. Talcott
 Dr. C. E. Mowery
 William D. Tomlinson
 Emily A. Neville
 Mary Gallup
 William F. Huntington
 Loretta Butler
 Sally Butler*

Steamboat Rock

Mrs. J. C. Agan**

*Brief History of the First Universalist Church of Osage, Iowa, (ms.) deposited with Dr. Effie McCollum Jones, Webster City, Iowa.

**I. U. C., President's Notebook.

Strawberry Point

Joseph Hallowell
 Charles Hall
 James H. Grannis
 William Grannis
 Alexander Blake
 P. (Peter) Blake
 Joseph C. Tremain
 Chancy Bemis

Edwin Dunton
 Frederick Adams
 Mrs. M. Hallowell
 Mrs. Calista Hall
 Mrs. Mathilda A. Dewey
 Mrs. Eliza P. Grannis
 Mrs. M. E. Dunton *

All of the above as well as those following have signatures following the constitution, June 19, 1859.

James Rop
 Able Griffin
 G. W. Richards
 Henry Bathmer
 Israel Jones
 William Carley
 M. O. Barnes
 Amos Eaton
 Asa Tarbox
 John Begelow
 William Cooper
 William Nie
 Melissa A. Wildes
 Rhodener Bishop

Lury H. Carley
 Harriet Turleaf
 May Haskins
 Mary A. Berry
 Mathilda Bemis
 Betsy Culbertson
 Augusta Hardman
 Mrs. Cooper
 E. A. Blake
 Clara A. Blake
 Mrs. J. Toy
 Melissa Cooper
 Mrs. Dalton**

Tipton

Charter members when it was reorganized in 1871:

C. P. Holden
 H. Hammond
 Dr. H. H. Maynard

Jesse James
 William Elliott
 O. W. Porter***

Other early members, some of whom might have been charter members too.

Mr. and Mrs. Aaron Gilbert
 Mr. and Mrs. Alonzo Shaw
 Mrs. C. P. Holden
 Mrs. H. Hammond
 Mrs. H. H. Maynard

Mrs. Jesse James
 Mr. and Mrs. C. P. Sheldon
 Mrs. William Elliott
 Mr. and Mrs. O. W. Porter
 Mr. and Mrs. J. W. Casad %

*History of Clayton County, Iowa, Chicago, 1882, p. 687.

**First Universalist Church, Strawberry Point, Iowa, Secretary's Record, Vol. 1.

***History of Cedar County, Iowa, Chicago, 1878, p. 473.

% Mrs. H. R. Ripley, Tipton, Iowa to Elva Tucker, Cedar Falls, Iowa, 1943.

Villisca

(Perhaps some of these were charter members.)

J. C. Bolt
W. J. Wallace

J. E. Garwood
Rebecca Overman*

Vinton

W. R. Chamberlin
B. F. Franks
J. H. Shutts
J. A. Whitlock

H. Lathrop
B. Kendall
J. A. McDaniel
S. R. Osgood**

Waverly

Mr. and Mrs. Seymour Goodspeed

(there were 24 other charter members.)

The following were active in the society in the early days.
Some of them were doubtless charter members.

Mr. and Mrs. S. H. Curtis
Mr. and Mrs. Ab. Barker
Mr. and Mrs. Bacon
Mr. and Mrs. Levi Nichols
Mrs. H. D. Perry
Mr. James Stephenson
Mrs. Ed Coburn
Mrs. Thomas Woodring
Mrs. J. H. Hollenbeck
Mrs. William Bodle

Mr. and Mrs. O. Babcock
Mrs. John Elliott
Mrs. J. Q. A. Russell
Mrs. H. R. Wells
Mrs. George R. Dean
A. Broadie
Mr. and Mrs. H. H. Couse
Mrs. Porter Bement
Mrs. Ab Barker
Mrs. I. A. Goodenough

*I. U. C., President's Notebook.

**J. F. Traer, Vinton, Iowa to Elva Tucker, Waterloo, Iowa, Feb. 8, 1944.

Waterloo

Charter Members in 1867

A. T. Lane	Wellington Russell
H. W. Jenny	N. Doty
W. F. Brown	R. S. Leland
W. A. Cutler	George Leland
J. C. Cropper	G. W. Morgan and their families *

Charter members of society reorganized on Dec. 6, 1874.

J. J. Austin, Rev.	H. M. Lane
A. T. Weatherwax	A. T. Lane
J. C. Cropper	Miss L. Hallock
Edmund R. Travis	Mrs. W. S. Hitchcock
Ann Cooley	Mrs. J. K. Hammond
G. W. Morgan	W. S. Hitchcock
J. B. Hubbard	O. H. Perry
M. E. Weatherwax	F. G. Wallace
M. J. Morgan	Eugene P. Sinclair
Cynthia E. Brown	Thomas C. Edman
H. P. Herring	Wm. D. DeLate
W. F. Brown	C. Doty
Jane Cropper	N. Doty
Alice Butterworth	R. Mervine
W. C. Mervine	E. S. Furgason
Wellington Rupell	M. Rider
F. E. Cutler	E. H. Walton**

*History of Black Hawk, County, Iowa, Chicago, 1915, p.344.

**First Universalist Society and Church, Waterloo, Iowa, Secretary's Record, Vol. 1, p. 5.

Webster City

Mr. and Mrs. Kendall Young	Mr. and Mrs. George F. Hathway
Mr. and Mrs. F. D. Young	Mr. and Mrs. Alonzo Thompson
Mr. and Mrs. Bradford Mason	Mr. and Mrs. Peleg Babcock
Mr. and Mrs. Rome H. Woodworth	Judge and Mrs. J. L. Kamrar
Mr. and Mrs. E. S. Wheeler	Mr. and Mrs. J. W. Young
Mr. and Mrs. Sumler Willson	Mr. and Mrs. Edward Mabbott
Mr. and Mrs. William Crosley	Mr. and Mrs. William Ellis
Col. and Mrs. Charles A. Clark	Mr. and Mrs. Warren Worthington
Mr. and Mrs. J. P. Clagg	Mr. and Mrs. George F. Richardson
Mr. and Mrs. R. I. Burleson	Mr. and Mrs. William Brown
Mr. and Mrs. L. L. Treat	Mrs. Jane Sheldon
Mr. and Mrs. W. B. Howard	Mrs. Maria Warren *

West Union

Of the people identified with this church some of the following may have been charter members.

Mr. and Mrs. T. D. Reeder	Helen Frolich
Mr. and Mrs. N. C. Spencer	Josephine Ainsworth
Mr. and Mrs. James F. Smith	A. T. Swearingen
Mr. and Mrs. W. J. Ainsworth	R. A. Barr
Silenda Burbank	J. W. Rogers
Ira Burbank	Mrs. O. E. and O. C. Taylor
A. Yl Whitmore	J. B. Herriman
Carrie Whitmore	Mr. and Mrs. William Cowle
V. N. Brown	J. C. Parker
James Colby	Harriet E. Fraverd**
H. A. Fraverd.	

*List made up largely from memory.

**The Argo, (West Union) 1881 - 1936.

IOWA UNIVERSALIST CONVENTIONS 1843-1943

1843	Iowa City	
1844	Muscatine (Bloomington then)	
1845	Burlington	
1846	Iowa City	
1847	Iowa City	September, third Saturday and following Sunday
1848	Iowa City	September, third Saturday and following Sunday
1849	Maquoketa	September, Friday and Saturday preceding the third Sunday
1850	Maquoketa	
1851	Boylies Mill	
1852	Iowa City	October 22
1853	Oskaloosa	September, first Friday
1854	Iowa City	October 6
1855	Tipton	
1856	Ottumwa	September 5
1857	Mt. Pleasant	September
1858	Independence	
1859	Iowa City	
1860	Strawberry Point	
1861	Oskaloosa	September
1862	Mt. Pleasant	September 6
1863	Iowa City	September
1864	Cedar Falls	
1865	Strawberry Point	
1866	Dubuque	
1867	Newton	

1868	Boone or Waterloo	
1869	Des Moines	September 1
1870	Mt. Pleasant	September 1
(In December 28 and 29, 1870 a special session was held at Mitchellville, notation found in Mt. Pleasant books)		
1871	Boone	September 7
1872	Iowa City	September
1873	Mitchellville	September 4
1874	Eldora	
1875	Bloomfield	
1876	Mitchellville	September
1877	Cedar Rapids	September 6
1878	New Sharon	August 22
1879	Grinnell	September 11
1880	Knoxville	
1881	Marshalltown	September 21
1882	Cedar Rapids	October 4-8
1883	Dubuque	
1884	Storm Lake	September 24
1885	Marshalltown	September 24-27
1886	Cedar Rapids	September 23-25
1887	Osage	
1888	Waterloo	September 18-20
1889	West Union	
1890	Marshalltown	September 24
1891	Waterloo	September 21-25
1892	Webster City	October 3-7
1893	Boone	October 23-26

1894	Mitchellville	August 30-September 3 (Joint conference held with the Unit. in Febru- ary of 1894; in Des Moines)
1895	Iowa Falls	September 15
1896	Waterloo	July 19-26
1897	Bloomfield	June 25-27
1898	Mt. Pleasant	September 21-25
1899	Webster City	September 21-24
1900	Boone	September 5-9
1901	Mitchellville	August 23-26
1902	Waterloo	September 30-October 2
1903	Cedar Rapids	September 30-October 2
1904	Mt. Pleasant	October 7-9
1905	Webster City	October 5-8
1906	Osage	
1907	Mitchellville	October 4-6
1908	Waterloo	September 17-20
1909	Cedar Rapids	
1910	Minneapolis, Minnesota	September 20-23 Tri-State Convention (Minnesota, Wisconsin and Iowa)
1911	Boone	October 2 Joint session with the Unitarians of Iowa
1912	Des Moines	October 2 Joint session with the Unitarians of Iowa
1913	Webster City	September 10-12
1914	Cedar Rapids	October 6-9 Joint conference with Unitarians of Iowa
1915	Osage	September 21-23

1916	Sioux City	October 3-5 Joint session with Unitarians of Iowa
1917	Osage	November 5 No quorum no convention, omitted the convention to save money to give toward World War I.
1918	Webster City	September 27
1919	Mitchellville	June 19-20
1920	Boone	June 14-16
1921	Waterloo	June 8-10
1922	Osage	June 6-8
1923	Webster City	June 12-14 Also a joint session with Unitarians in Iowa City in October
1924	Waterloo	June 10-11
1925	Mitchellville	June 17-18
1926	Webster City	June 16-17
1927	Osage	July 11-12
1928	Mitchellville	June 14-15
1929	Mt. Pleasant	June 13-14
1930	Waterloo	June 24-25
1931	Webster City	June 16-18
1932	Osage	June 12-14
1933	Mitchellville	June 14-15
1934	Mt. Pleasant	June 6-8
1935	Waterloo	June 5-7
1936	Webster City	June 5-7
1937	Mitchellville	June 11-13
1938	Waterloo	June 17-19
1939	Waterloo	June 9-11
1940	Webster City	June 7-9

1941	Mt. Pleasant	June 13-15
1942	Waterloo	June 11, 12, 13, 14
1943	Webster City	June 11, 12, 13

All months and days taken from the Mt. Pleasant records from 1849-1898.

Locations from 1843-1893 taken partially from the Mt. Pleasant records but principally from the President's Notebook of the Iowa Universalist Convention.

All data from 1893-1943 was obtained from the Secretary's Records of the Iowa Universalist Convention, Vols. 3, 4, 5.

STATE CONVENTION OFFICERS: 1843-1943

- 1843 - State Convention
No officers given.

("A new society was formed in Bloomington, making the total 2. Preacher, A. R. Gardner, Iowa City, where they are erecting a meeting-house.")
- 1845 - State Convention
No officers given.

("New Society. - one in Des Moines county, name not given. New Meeting-House. - Iowa City. Preachers. - A. R. Gardner, Iowa City; H. Cole, Millville. Summary. - 4 societies, 1 meetinghouse, and 2 preachers.)
- 1846 - State Convention
No officers given.

Summary. - 4 societies, 1 preacher (H. Cole,) and meetinghouse.
- 1847 - State Convention
Standing Clerk Manning Hull Overman's Ferry
- 1848 - State Convention
Standing Clerk Manning Hull Overman's Ferry
- 1849 - State Convention
Standing Clerk Rev. T. Abbott Tipton, Cedar Co.
- 1850 - State Convention
Secretary Manning Hull Overman's Ferry
- 1851 - State Convention
Secretary Manning Hull Overman's Ferry
- 1852 - State Convention
Secretary Manning Hull Overman's Ferry
- 1853 - State Convention
Standing Clerk Manning Hull Overman's Ferry
- 1854 - State Convention
Standing Clerk Rev. I. M. Westfall Pleasant Valley
- 1855 - State Convention
Standing Clerk Rev. J. Spooner Iowa City

- 1856 - State Convention
Standing Clerk Rev. J. N. Clark Iowa City
- 1857 - State Convention
Standing Clerk Rev. Alfred Peck Iowa City
- 1858 - State Convention
Standing Clerk Rev. Alfred Peck Iowa City
- 1859 - State Convention
Standing Clerk Rev. Alfred Peck LeClaire
- 1860 - State Convention
Standing Clerk Rev. Alfred Peck LeClaire
Agent and mission-
ary for the northern
portion of the state
Rev. Alfred Peck LeClaire
Southern portion
of the state Rev. T. Ballinger
President, State
Educational Board D. C. Tomlinson
Secretary T. L. Marshall Muscatine
- 1861 - State Convention
Standing Clerk unknown
State Educational Board
Secretary T. L. Marshall Muscatine
(State Missionary Society meets with the Convention)
- 1862 - State Convention
Standing Clerk Rev. L.H. Keyes Cedar Rapids
State Missionary Board
President Alden Fletcher
Secretary D. Connell Buckingham
Treasurer J.N. Clark Iowa City
Missionary Rev. J.P. Sanford Tipton
State Educational Board meets with the Convention
Secretary T.L. Marshall Muscatine
- 1863 - State Convention
Standing Clerk Rev. S.M. Brice Centre-Point
State Missionary Board
President Alden Fletcher
Secretary D. Connell Buckingham
Treasurer J.N. Clark Iowa City
Missionary Rev. J.P. Sanford Tipton
State Educational Board
Secretary T.L. Marshall Muscatine
- 1864 - State Convention
Standing Clerk J.N. Clark Iowa City
State Missionary Board
Secretary D. Connell Buckingham
Missionary Rev. J.P. Sanford Tipton

- 1865 - State Convention
 Standing Clerk J. N. Clark Iowa City
 State Missionary Board
 Secretary D. Connell Buckingham
 Missionary Rev. J.P. Sanford Marshalltown
- 1866 - State Convention
 Standing Clerk J. N. Clark Iowa City
 State Missionary Board
 Secretary D. Connell Buckingham
 Missionary Rev. J. P. Sanford Marshalltown
- 1867 - State Convention
 Standing Clerk Rev. E. Morris Mt. Pleasant
- 1868 - State Convention
 President Rev. W. S. Bates
 Corresponding Secretary Dr. J. W. Hanson Dubuque
 Preacher of Occasional Sermon Rev. W.R. Chamberlin Vinton
- 1869 - State Convention
 President Hon. M. Kingman
 Corresponding Secretary and Standing Clerk Dr. J. W. Hanson Dubuque
 Treasurer Hon. T. Mitchell Mitchellville
 Preacher of Occasional Sermon Rev. J. P. Sanford Marshalltown
 Directors Rev. H. Jewell Manchester
 Rev. T. Ballinger Oskaloosa
 Rev. A. J. Chapin Iowa City
 Hon. J. D. Thompson Eldora
 Committee of Fellowship Rev. R. G. Hamilton Cedar Falls
 Rev. J. R. Sage Mitchellville
 L. J. Orr Boone
- 1870 - State Convention
 President Hon. M. Kingman
 Corresponding Secretary and Standing Clerk Rev. J. W. Hanson Dubuque
 Treasurer Hon. T. Mitchell Mitchellville
 Preacher of Occasional Sermon Rev. J. P. Sanford Marshalltown
 Rev. H. Jewell Manchester
 Rev. T. Ballinger Oskaloosa
 Rev. A. J. Chapin Iowa City
 Hon. J. D. Thompson Eldora
 Committee of Fellowship Rev. R. G. Hamilton Cedar Falls
 Rev. J. R. Sage Mitchellville
 J. Orr Boone

1871 - State Convention		
President	Hon. J. D. Thompson	Eldora
Treasurer	Hon. Thomas Mitchell	Mitchellville
Standing Clerk	Wm. H. Fleming, Esq.	Des Moines
S. S. Secretary	Rev. A. H. Sweetzer	
1872 - State Convention		
President	Hon. J. D. Thompson	Eldora
Treasurer	Thomas Mitchell	Mitchellville
Standing Clerk	Wm. H. Fleming, Esq.	Des Moines
Sabbath School		
Secretary	Rev. B. F. Snook	Marcon
Committee of		
Fellowship,	Hon. J. L. Edwards	Mt. Pleasant
Ordination and	Rev. J. R. Sage	Mitchellville
Discipline	Rev. B. F. Snook	Marion
Directors	L. E. Conger	Dexter
	Rev. A. J. Chapin	Iowa City
	Dr. E. H. Harris	Grinnell
	Rev. C. P. Nash	Newton
1873 - State Convention		
President	Hon. J. D. Thompson	Eldora
Vice-President	Rev. A. J. Chapin	Iowa City
Secretary	Rev. LeGrand Powers	Mitchellville
Treasurer	Thomas Mitchell	Mitchellville
Committee of		
Fellowship,	Rev. C. P. Nash	Newton
Ordination, and	Rev. B. F. Snook	Marion
Discipline	Rev. W. H. Fleming	Des Moines
Preacher of		
Occasional Sermon	Rev. W. W. Merritt	Clarinda
Alternate	Rev. C. P. Nash	Newton
1874 - State Convention		
Preacher of		
Occasional Sermon	Rev. J. H. Farnsworth	
President	Mr. E. A. Van Cise	Mt. Pleasant
Vice-President	Mr. R. A. Sankey*	
Secretary	Rev. LeGrand Powers	Mitchellville
Treasurer	Hon. Thomas Mitchell	Mitchellville
Committee of		
Fellowship,	M. L. Edwards	Mt. Pleasant
Ordination and	B. F. Snook	Marion
Discipline	J. H. Farnsworth	Des Moines
Trustees	Rev. W. J. Hicks	Strawberry Point
	Hon. J. D. Thompson	Eldora
	Hon. M. L. Edwards	Mt. Pleasant
1875 - State Convention		
President	Edwin A. Van Cise	Mt. Pleasant
Vice-President	Rev. B. F. Rogers	Cedar Rapids

* The residence of many are not known because they were not recorded in the Universalist Companion and Register.

- 1875 - State Convention (continued)
- | | | |
|-------------------------------|--------------------|---------------|
| Secretary | B. F. Snook | Marion |
| Treasurer | Thomas Mitchell | Mitchellville |
| Trustees for 3 yrs. | Wm. H. Fleming | Mitchellville |
| Preacher of Occasional Sermon | Rev. J. J. Austin | Waterloo |
| Alternate | Rev. A. Countryman | Dubuque |
- 1876 - State Convention
- | | | |
|--|--|--|
| President | Hon. Thomas Mitchell | Mitchellville |
| Vice-President | Col. S. A. Moore* | |
| Treasurer | Dr. E. H. Harris | Grinnell |
| Secretary | Rev. B. F. Snook | Marion |
| Committee of Fellowship, Ordination and Discipline | Rev. J. J. Austin
Rev. B. F. Rogers
Mr. E. A. Van Cise | Waterloo
Cedar Rapids
Mt. Pleasant |
| Preacher of next Occasional Sermon | B. F. Rogers (Rev.) | |
| Alternate | Rev. J. R. Sage | Mitchellville |
- 1877 - State Convention
- | | | |
|--|---|--------------------------|
| President | Hon. Thomas Mitchell | Mitchellville |
| Secretary and State Agent | Rev. Isa A. Eberhart | Belle Plaine |
| Treasurer | C. Howard | Newton |
| Trustee | S. G. Carter | New Sharon |
| Preacher of next Occasional Sermon | Rev. A. Countryman | Dubuque |
| Alternate | Rev. J. R. Sage | Mitchellville |
| Committee of Fellowship, Ordination and Discipline | Rev. J. R. Sage
Rev. Joseph Harsh
Mr. S. N. Lindley | Mitchellville
Chelsea |
- 1878 - State Convention
- | | | |
|--|--|---------------------------------------|
| President | F. J. Upton | Cedar Rapids |
| Vice-President | Thomas Mitchell | Mitchellville |
| Secretary | Rev. Isa A. Eberhart | Storm Lake |
| Treasurer | J. D. Kennard | |
| Trustee | J. B. Marston | |
| Committee of Fellowship, Ordination and Discipline | Rev. T. Ballinger
Dr. E. H. Harris
Mr. M. L. Edwards | Oskaloosa
Grinnell
Mt. Pleasant |
| Preacher of Occasional Sermon | Rev. H. V. Chase | |
- 1879 - State Convention
- | | | |
|-------------------------|---|----------------------------|
| President | Hon. Thomas Mitchell | Mitchellville |
| Vice-President | Col. S. A. Moore | |
| Secretary | Rev. O. F. Van Cise | Mt. Pleasant |
| Treasurer | F. A. Borner | Des Moines |
| Committee of Fellowship | Rev. J. A. Hoyt
Mr. F. J. Upton
Mr. S. N. Lindley | Storm Lake
Cedar Rapids |

- 1879 - State Convention (continued)
- | | | |
|-------------------------------|---------------------|--------------|
| State Superintendent | Rev. I. A. Eberhart | Belle Plaine |
| Preacher of Occasional Sermon | Rev. W. W. Nutting | Cedar Rapids |
- 1880 - State Convention
- | | | |
|--|---|---------------|
| President | Hon. Thomas Mitchell | Mitchellville |
| Vice-President | Dr. E.H.Harris | Grinnell |
| Secretary | W.P.Payne, Rev. | Nevada |
| Treasurer | F. A. Bomer | Des Moines |
| Committee of Fellowship, Ordination and Discipline | Rev. J. A. Hoyt
Rev. W. S. Balch
Dr. E. H. Harris | Grinnell |
| State Superintendent | Rev. I. A. Eberhart | Belle Plaine |
| Occasional Preacher | Rev. H. Slade | |
- 1881 - State Convention
- | | | |
|--|--|---------------|
| President | F. G. Upton | Cedar Rapids |
| Vice-President | J. H. Vail | |
| Secretary | Rev. W. P. Payne | Nevada |
| Treasurer | Thomas Mitchell | Mitchellville |
| Committee of Fellowship, Ordination and Discipline | Rev. J. A. Hoyt
Rev. I. A. Eberhart
Mr. J. H. Garrison | Belle Plaine |
| Preacher of Occasional Sermon | Fidelia W. Gillette | Mitchellville |
- 1882 - State Convention
- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| President | F. G. Upton | Cedar Rapids |
| Vice-President | E. H. Harris | Grinnell |
| Secretary | Rev. W. P. Payne | Nevada |
| Treasurer | F. A. Bomer | Des Moines |
| Trustees | Rev. F. W. Gillette
Rev. B. F. Rogers
Thomas Mitchell | Mitchellville
Newton
Mitchellville |
| Committee of Fellowship, Ordination and Discipline | Rev. J. A. Hoyt
Rev. H. Whitney
Dr. E. H. Harris | Storm Lake
Grinnell |
| Executive Committee | F. J. Upton
Dr. E. H. Harris | Cedar Rapids
Grinnell |
- 1883 - State Convention
- | | | |
|-------------------------|--|--|
| President | F. J. Upton | Cedar Rapids |
| Vice-President | R. W. Tirrell | Manchester |
| Secretary | Rev. W. P. Payne | Nevada |
| Treasurer | F. A. Bomer | Des Moines |
| Trustees | C. H. Brown
Rev. B.F. Rogers | Mitchellville
and Newton |
| Committee of Fellowship | Thomas Mitchell
Rev. E. L. Briggs
Rev. B.F. Snook
Mr. O.A. Mars | Mitchellville
Webster City
Cedar Falls |
| State Missionary | Rev. B.F. Rogers | Mitchellville
and Newton |

1884 - State Convention		
President	J.D.Platt	Waterloo
Vice-President	R.W.Tirrell	Manchester
Secretary	Rev.B.F.Rogers,	Cedar Rapids
Treasurer	F.A.Bomer	Des Moines
Committee of Fellowship	Rev.E.L.Briggs	Wilton Junction
	Rev.B.F.Snook	Cedar Falls
	M.L.Edwards	Mt. Pleasant
Trustees	C.H.Brown	
	Thomas Mitchell	Mitchellville
	Rev.Amos Crum	Dubuque
State Missionary Preacher of Occasional Sermon	Rev.B.F.Rogers	Cedar Rapids
	Rev.Amos Crum	Dubuque
1885 - State Convention		
President	J.D.Platt, Waterloo	Waterloo
Vice-President	Rev.Amos Crum	Dubuque
Secretary	Rev.B.F.Rogers	Stuart
Treasurer	F.A.Bomer	Des Moines
Committee of Fellowship		
	Rev.A.A.Thayer	Osage
	Rev.J.A.Hoyt	Belle Plaine
	Luke Roberts	Clinton
Trustees	C.H.Brown	
	A.T.Weatherwax	Waterloo
	Mrs.J.W.A.Crosby	
State Missionary Preacher of Occasional Sermon	Rev.B.F.Rogers	Stuart
	Rev.C.L.Waite	Storm Lake
1886 - State Convention		
President	J.D.Platt	Waterloo
Vice-President	Rev.A.Crum	Dubuque
Secretary	Rev. B.F.Rogers	Stuart
Treasurer	F.A.Bomer	Des Moines
Committee of Fellowship		
	Rev.J.A.Hoyt	Belle Plaine
	Rev.W.A.Pratt	Cedar Rapids
Preacher of Occasional Sermon	Dr.W.Roberts	Marshalltown
Visitors to Lombard University	Rev.J.F.Schindler	Marshalltown
	Rev.W.A.Pratt	Cedar Rapids
	Mrs.B.F.Rogers,	Stuart
1887 - State Convention		
President	J.D.Platt	Waterloo
Vice-President	Rev.Amos Crum	Dubuque
Secretary	Rev. James A.Hoyt	Belle Plaine
Treasurer	F.A.Bomer	Des Moines
Committee on Fellowship		
	Rev.W.A.Pratt	Cedar Rapids
	Rev.A.A.Thayer	Osage
	Mr.F.J.Upton	Cedar Rapids

1887 - State Convention (continued)		
Trustees	James A. Throop Mrs. F. D. Pierce W. F. Brown	Mt. Pleasant Cedar Falls
Preacher of Occasional Sermon	Rev. M. H. Houghton	Storm Lake
Visitors to Lombard University	Rev. W. A. Pratt I. VanCise	Cedar Rapids Mt. Pleasant
1888 - State Convention		
President	Rev. Amos Crum	Dubuque
Vice-President	J. D. Platt	Waterloo
Secretary	Rev. F. D. Pierce	Cedar Falls
Treasurer	F. A. Bomer	Belle Plaine
Committee of Fellowship	Rev. James Gorton Rev. M. H. Houghton Miss Mary Edgerton	Cedar Falls Storm Lake Waterloo
Trustees	James A. Throop Rev. W. A. Pratt W. F. Brown	Mt. Pleasant Cedar Rapids
Visitors to Lombard University	Rev. W. A. Pratt Rev. Amos Crum	Cedar Rapids Webster City
1889 - State Convention		
President	Rev. Amos Crum	Webster City
Vice-President	J. D. Platt	Waterloo
Secretary	Rev. W. A. Pratt	Cedar Rapids
Treasurer	F. A. Bomer	Belle Plaine
Committee of Fellowship	Rev. James Gorton Rev. B. F. Snook J. F. Toy	Cedar Falls Clarinda Storm Lake
Trustees	James A. Throop Rev. W. A. Pratt Rev. Amos Crum	Mt. Pleasant Cedar Rapids Webster City
1890 - State Convention		
President	F. A. Bomer	Belle Plaine
Vice-President	Rev. Amos Crum	Webster City
Secretary	Rev. J. H. Palmer	Cedar Rapids
Treasurer	Hon. J. D. Platt	Waterloo
Committee of Fellowship	Rev. W. S. Ralph Rev. A. A. Thayer J. F. Toy	Storm Lake Osage Storm Lake
Trustees	E. M. Wooley J. H. Owen W. F. Brown	Charles City

1890 - State Convention		
President	F.A.Bomer	Des Moines
Vice-President	Percy Lane	Waterloo
Secretary	Rev.T.E.Dotter	Eldora
Treasurer	Franklin C.Platt	Waterloo
Trustees	J.H.Owen	Charles City
	W.F.Brown	
	C.D.Van Vechten	Cedar Rapids
Committee of Fellowship	Rev.T.W.Woodrow	Marshalltown
	Rev.MattWing	Manchester
	E.Hurlbut	Marshalltown
Preacher of Occasional Sermon	Rev.T.W.Woodrown	Marshalltown
1892 - State Convention		
President	F.A.Bomer	Des Moines
Vice-President	Percy A.Lane	Waterloo
Secretary	Rev.T.E.Dotter	Eldora
Treasurer	Franklin C.Platt	Waterloo
Trustees	Mrs.R.W.Woodrow	Marshalltown
	W.F.Brown	C.D.
	C.D.Van Vechten	Cedar Rapids
Committee of Fellowship	Rev.T.W.Woodrow	Marshalltown
	Rev.L.F.Porter	Waterloo
	E. Hurlburt	Marshalltown
Preacher of Occasional Sermon	Rev.L.F.Porter	Waterloo
1893 - State Convention		
President	Watson Roberts	Marshalltown
Vice-President	Rev.J.H.Palmer	Cedar Rapids
Secretary	Rev.Thom.E.Dotter	Cedar Falls
Treasurer	Franklin C.Platt	Waterloo
Trustees	Mrs.T.W.Woodrow	Marshalltown
	J.H.Funk	Iowa Falls
	C.D.VanVechten	Cedar Rapids
Committee of Fellowship	Rev.Amos Crum	Dubuque
	Rev.G.S.Gowdy	Eldora
	F.A.Bomer	Des Moines
Preacher of Occasional Sermon	Rev.B.F.Snook	Webster City
1894 - State Convention		
President	Watson Roberts	Marshalltown
Vice-President	Rev.J.H.Palmer	Cedar Rapids
Secretary	Rev.Thom.E.Dotter	Cedar Falls
Treasurer	Franklin C.Platt	Waterloo
Trustees	Mrs.T.W.Woodrow	Marshalltown
	J.H.Funk	Iowa Falls
	C.D.VanVechten	Cedar Rapids
Committee of Fellowship	Rev.Amos Crum	Webster City
	Rev.G.S.Gowdy	Eldora
	F.A.Bomer	Des Moines

- 1894 - State Convention (continued)
 Preacher of Occasional Sermon Rev. B. F. Snook Webster City
- 1895 - State Convention
 President Hon. O. B. Ayers Des Moines
 Vice-President Charles E. Harsh Des Moines
 Secretary Rev. J. H. Palmer Cedar Rapids
 Treasurer S. J. Oldfield Mitchellville
 Committee of Fellowship
 Rev. Amos Crum Webster City
 Rev. A. K. Beem Osage
 S. J. Oldfield Mitchellville
 Preacher of Occasional Sermon Rev. S. L. Crum Webster City
- 1896 - State Convention
 President O. B. Ayers Des Moines
 Vice-President Jacob Glosy St. Ansgar
 Secretary W. T. Hatswell Red Oak
 Treasurer S. J. Oldfield, Mitchellville
 Trustees J. B. Harsh Creston
 S. W. Hurlbut Clarinda
 Alta Light Iowa Falls
 Committee of Fellowship
 Rev. J. H. Palmer Cedar Rapids
 Rev. Amos Crum Webster City
 E. P. Sinclair Waterloo
 Preacher of Occasional Sermon Rev. T. E. Dotter Marshalltown
- (They voted to employ a Superintendent)
- 1897 - State Convention
 President O. B. Ayers Des Moines
 Vice-President Amos Crum Webster City
 Secretary W. T. Hatswell Red Oak
 Treasurer S. J. Oldfield Mitchellville
 Trustees Hon. W. H. McAchran Bloomfield
 J. B. Harsh Creston
 S. W. Hurlbut Clarinda
 Committee of Fellowship
 Rev. H. L. Gillespie Manchester
 Rev. J. Edward Keyes Mitchellville
 Mr. Franklin C. Platt, Waterloo
 Preacher of Occasional Sermon Rev. H. L. Gillespie Northwood
 State Superintendent Dr. Amos Crum Webster City
- 1898 - State Convention
 President O. B. Ayers Des Moines
 Vice-President Jas. A. Throop Mt. Pleasant
 Secretary A. R. Tillinghast Waterloo
 Treasurer S. J. Oldfield Mitchellville
 Trustees C. L. Henny Mitchellville
 W. H. McAchran Bloomfield
 J. B. Harsh Creston

1898 - State Convention (continued)

Committee of Fellowship		
	Rev. J. L. Everton	Osage
	I. P. VanCise	Mt. Pleasant
	Rev. T. E. Dotter	Manchester
Preacher of Occasional Sermon		
	Rev. A. R. Tillinghast	Waterloo
State Supt.	Dr. Amos Crum	Webster City

1899 - State Convention

President	O. B. Ayers	Des Moines
	(F. C. Platt completed term)	
Vice-President	Rev. W. P. Payne	Nevada
Secretary	Rev. A. R. Tillinghast	Waterloo
Treasurer	S. J. Oldfield	Mitchellville
Trustees		
	G. W. Stoughton	Osage
	C. L. Henry	Mitchellville
	W. H. McAchran	Bloomfield
Preacher of Occasional Sermon		
	Rev. J. L. Everton	Osage
Committee of Fellowship		
	Rev. J. L. Everton	Osage
	Dr. Amos Crum	Webster City
	Louis Tucker	Mitchellville
Superintendent	Mrs. (Rev.) S. L. Crum	Webster City

1900 - State Convention

President	F. C. Platt	Waterloo
Vice-President	Rev. W. P. Payne,	Nevada
Secretary	Rev. A. R. Tillinghast	Waterloo
Treasurer	S. J. Oldfield	Mitchellville
Trustees		
	C. D. Van Vechten	Cedar Rapids
	G. W. Stoughton	Osage
	C. L. Henry	Mitchellville
Committee of Fellowship		
	Louis Tucker	
	Rev. Harriet I. Baker	West Union
	Rev. A. R. Tillinghast	Waterloo
Preacher of occasional Sermon (elected this year) - none		
Superintendent	Mrs. Sophronia Crum	Webster City
	(for 3 months)	

1901 - State Convention

President	F. C. Platt	Waterloo
Vice-President	Rev. W. P. Payne	Nevada
Secretary	A. R. Tillinghast	Waterloo
Treasurer	S. J. Oldfield,	Mitchellville
Trustees		
	Dr. F. J. Drake	Webster City
	Rev. George Crum	
	G. W. Stoughton	Osage
Preacher of Occasional Sermon		
	Rev. W. B. Buchanan	Mt. Pleasant
Committee of Fellowship		
	Rev. W. D. Buchanan	Mt. Pleasant
	Rev. H. C. Richardson	Mitchellville and Boone

1901 - State Convention (continued)

Committee of Fellowship (cont)	Louis Tucker	Mitchellville
State Superintendent	Rev. J.B.Fosher	

1902 - State Convention

President	F.C.Platt	Waterloo
Vice-President	Rev. W.P.Payne	Nevada
Secretary	Rev. Frank York	Waterloo
Treasurer	S.J.Oldfield	Mitchellville
Trustees	Dr.F.J.Drake	Webster City
	G.M.Stoughton	Osage
	C.D.VanVechten	Cedar Rapids
Preacher of Occasional Sermon	Rev. H.C.Richardson	Mitchellville and Boone
Committee of Fellowship	Frank Forbes	Northwood
	Rev. H.C.Richardson	Mitchellville and Boone
Superintendent	Rev.W.B.Buchanan	Mt. Pleasant
	Rev. F.H.York	Waterloo

1903 - State Convention

President	F.C.Platt	Waterloo
Vice-President	Rev.W.P.Payne	Nevada
Secretary	Rev.Effie McCollum Jones	Waterloo
Treasurer	S.J.Oldfield	Mitchellville
Trustees	Dr.F.J.Drake	Webster City
	C.M.Stoughton	Osage
	Frank Forbes	Northwood
Preacher of Occasional Sermon	Rev.Frank York	Waterloo
	(given by Dr. Jones)	
Committee of Fellowship	W.D.Buchanan,	Mt. Pleasant
	Rev. H.C.Richardson	Mitchellville and Boone
Tri-State Superintendent	Hon. Frank Forbes	Northwood
	Dr.W.H.McGlaufflin	
	(gave \$500 for his support)	

1904 - State Convention

President	F.C.Platt	Waterloo
Vice-President	Rev.W.P.Payne	Nevada
Secretary	Rev.Effie M. Jones	Waterloo
Treasurer	S.J.Oldfield	Mitchellvill
Trustees	Dr.F.J.Drake	Webster City
	G.M.Stoughton	Osage
	Frank Forbes	Northwood
Preacher of Occasional Sermon	Rev.W.H. McGlaufflin	

1904 - State Convention (cont.)		
Committee of Fellowship	Rev.W.B.Buchanan Rev.W.S.Ralph Hon.Frank Forbes	Mt. Pleasant Osage Northwood
Superintendent (Tri-State)	Dr.W.H.McGlaufflin	
1905 - State Convention		
President	F.C.Platt	Waterloo
Vice-President	Rev.W.P.Payne	Nevada
Secretary	Rev.Effie M.Jones	Waterloo
Treasurer	S.J.Oldfield	Mitchellville
Trustees	C.D.VanVechten Frank Forbes Dr.F.J.Drake	Cedar Rapids Northwood Webster City
Committee of Fellowship	Rev.W.S.Ralph I.P.VanCise Rev.S.L.Crum	Osage Mt. Pleasant Manchester
Preacher of Occasional Sermon Tri-State Superintendent	Rev.W.A.Pratt Dr.W.H.McGlaufflin	Cedar Rapids
1906 - State Convention		
President	F.C.Platt	Waterloo
Vice-President	Rev.W.S.Ralph	Osage
Secretary	Rev.Effie M.Jones	Waterloo
Treasurer	S.J.Oldfield	Mitchellville
Trustees	C.D.VanVechten Frank Forbes Dr.F.J.Drake	Cedar Rapids Northwood Webster City
Committee of Fellowship	Herbert Stoughton Rev.Agnes Ralph Rev.S.L.Crum	Osage Osage Manchester
Preacher of Occasional Sermon Tri-State Supt.	A.N.Alcott Dr.W.H.McGlaufflin	Webster City
1907 - State Convention		
President	F.C.Platt	Waterloo
Vice-President	Rev.W.S.Ralph	Osage
Secretary	Rev.Effie M.Jones	Waterloo
Treasurer	S.J.Oldfield	Mitchellville
Trustees	Dr.F.J.Drake C.D.VanVechten Frank Forbes	Webster City Cedar Rapids Northwood
Committee of Fellowship	Rev. Agnes Ralph Rev.S.L.Crum H.L.Stoughton	Osage Manchester Osage
Preacher of Occasional Sermon Tri-State Superintendent	Rev.N.E.Spicer Dr.W.H.McGlaufflin	Webster City

1908 - State Convention		
President	F. C. Platt	Waterloo
Vice-President		
Secretary	Rev. Effie McCollum Jones	Waterloo
Treasurer	S. J. Oldfield	Mitchellville
Trustees	H. L. Stoughton Dr. F. D. Drake Frank Forbes	Osage Webster City Northwood
Preacher of Occasional Sermons	Rev. Joseph F. Newton	Cedar Rapids
Committee of Fellowship	Rev. N. E. Spicer Rev. W. P. Payne A. P. Fogg	Webster City Nevada Boone
Tri-State Superintendent	Rev. A. R. Tillinghast	Waterloo
1909 - State Convention		
President	Dr. F. J. Drake	Webster City
Vice-President	D. C. VanVechten	Cedar Rapids
Secretary	Rev. Jennie Barholomew	Boone
Treasurer	S. J. Oldfield,	Mitchellville
Trustees	H. B. Cropper	Waterloo
H. L. Stoughton	C. T. Ballou	Boone
H. L. Stoughton	H. L. Stoughton	Osage
Tri-State Superintendent	Rev. A. R. Tillinghast	
1910 - State Convention		
President	Dr. F. J. Drake	Webster City
Vice-President	D. D. VanVechten	Cedar Rapids
Secretary	Rev. Jennie L. Bartholomew	Boone
Treasurer	S. J. Oldfield	Mitchellville
Trustees	H. L. Stoughton H. B. Cropper C. T. Ballou	Osage Waterloo Boone
Committee of Fellowship	Rev. N. E. Spicer Rev. Effie McCollum Jones A. T. Cooper	Webster City Waterloo Cedar Rapids
Preacher of Occasional Sermon	Rev. Jennie L. Bartholomew	
Tri-State Superintendent	Rev. A. R. Tillinghast	
1910 - State Convention		
President	Dr. F. J. Drake	Webster City
Vice-President	C. D. VanVechten	Cedar Rapids
Secretary	Rev. Jennie Bartho- lomew	Osage

1911 - State Convention (continued)		
Treasurer	S. J. Oldfield	Mitchellville
Trustees	C. T. Ballou	Boone
	H. L. Stoughton	Osage
	H. B. Cropper	Waterloo
Committee of Fellowship	Rev. N. E. Spicer	Webster City
	Rev. Effie McCollum	
	Jones	Waterloo
	A. T. Cooper	Cedar Rapids
Preacher of Occasional Sermon	Rev. L. O. Black	Boone
Superintendent	Rev. T. B. Fisher	
1912 - State Convention		
President	H. B. Cropper	Waterloo
Vice-President	Rev. Laura Bowman	
	Galer	Mt. Pleasant
Secretary	H. L. Stoughton	Osage
Treasurer	S. J. Oldfield	Mitchellville
Trustees	C. N. Jenkins	Cedar Rapids
	Mrs. E. E. Shipman	Webster City
	C. T. Ballou	Boone
Preacher of Occasional Sermon	Rev. Laura Bowman	
	Galer	Mt. Pleasant
Committee of Fellowship	Rev. Effie McCollum	
	Jones	Waterloo
	Rev. Joseph F. Newton	Cedar Rapids
	A. T. Cooper	Cedar Rapids
Tri-State Superintendent	Rev. T. B. Fisher	
1913 - State Convention		
President	H. B. Cropper	Waterloo
Vice-President	Rev. Laura Bowman	
	Galer	Mt. Pleasant
Secretary	H. L. Stoughton	Osage
Treasurer	S. J. Oldfield	Mitchellville
Trustees	C. N. Jenkins	Cedar Rapids
	Mrs. E. E. Shipman	Webster City
	C. T. Ballou	Boone
Preacher of Occasional Sermon	Rev. L. C. McLaughlin	Webster City
Committee of Fellowship	Rev. Effie McCollum	
	Jones	Waterloo
	Rev. Joseph Fort	
	Newton	Cedar Rapids
	A. T. Cooper	Cedar Rapids
Superintendent	Rev. F. W. Miller	Osage

1914 - State Convention		
President	H. B. Cropper	Waterloo
Vice-President	Rev. Laura B. Galer	Mt. Pleasant
Secretary	H. L. Stoughton	Osage
Treasurer	S. J. Oldfield	Mitchellville
Trustees	C. N. Jenkins	Cedar Rapids
	C. T. Ballou	Boone
	P. J. Brandrup	Webster City
Preacher of Occasional Sermon	Rev. H. L. Haywood	Webster City
Committee of Fellowship	Dr. Effie McCollum Jones	Waterloo
	Rev. Joseph F. Newton	Cedar Rapids
	A. T. Cooper	Cedar Rapids
Superintendent	Rev. F. W. Miller	Osage
1915 - State Convention		
President	H. B. Cropper	Waterloo
Vice-President	Rev. Laura Bowman Galer	Mt. Pleasant
Secretary	H. L. Stoughton	Osage
Treasurer	J. E. Reid	Altoona
Trustees	P. J. Brandrup	Webster City
	C. T. Ballou	Boone
	C. N. Jenkins	Cedar Rapids
Preacher of Occasional Sermon	Dr. Effie McCollum Jones	Waterloo
Committee of Fellowship	Dr. Effie McCollum Jones	Waterloo
	A. T. Cooper	Cedar Rapids
	Dr. J. S. Cook	Mitchellville
Superintendent	F. W. Miller	
	Dr. J. S. Cook did the missionary work one day a week.	
1916 - State Convention		
President	Dr. F. J. Drake	Webster City
Vice-President	Rev. Laura Bowman Galer	Mt. Pleasant
Secretary	H. L. Stoughton	Osage
Treasurer	J. E. Reid	Altoona
Trustees	H. B. Cropper	Waterloo
	P. J. Brandrup	Webster City
	C. N. Jenkins	Cedar Rapids
Preacher of Occasional Sermon	Dr. John S. Cook	Mitchellville
Committee of Fellowship	Dr. John S. Cook	Mitchellville
	A. T. Cooper	Cedar Rapids
	Rev. H. L. Haywood	Waterloo
Superintendent	Rev. F. W. Miller	Osage

1917 - State Convention

Same officers because no convention was held;
gave the expense account of \$300 to the Red Cross
and Y.M.C.A. for War Relief.

Mrs. Galer was acting president, Dr. Drake was a
lieutenant in the army

Preacher of

Occasional Sermon Rev. Harold Drew Cedar Rapids

1918 - State Convention

President

Rev. Laura Bowman
Galer Mt. Pleasant

Vice-President

Rev. Effie McCollum
Jones Webster City

Secretary

H. L. Stoughton Osage

Treasurer

J. E. Reed Altoona

Trustees

C. N. Jenkins Cedar Rapids

H. B. Cropper Waterloo

F. J. Brandrup Webster City

Preacher of

Occasional Sermon

Rev. O. G. Colegrove Mitchellville

Committee of

Fellowship

Rev. H. L. Haywood Waterloo

Rev. O. G. Colegrove Mitchellville

A. T. Cooper Cedar Rapids

Superintendent

Rev. O. G. Colegrove Mitchellville

1919 - State Convention

President

Roger S. Galer Mt. Pleasant

Vice-President

J. M. Grimm Cedar Rapids

Secretary

H. L. Stoughton Osage

Treasurer

J. E. Reid Altoona

Trustees

C. N. Jenkins Cedar Rapids

H. B. Cropper Waterloo

Dr. F. J. Drake Webster City

Preacher of

Occasional Sermon

Rev. A. W. Altenbern Osage

Committee of

Fellowship

Rev. O. G. Colegrove Mitchellville

Dr. Effie McCollum

Jones Webster City

Mrs. Ethel Stewart Grinnell

Superintendent

Rev. O.G. Colegrove Mitchellville

1920 - State Convention

President

Roger S. Galer Mt. Pleasant

Vice-President

Dr. F. J. Drake Webster City

Secretary

H. L. Stoughton Osage

Treasurer

J. E. Reid Altoona

Trustees

H. B. Cropper Waterloo

C. N. Jenkins Cedar Rapids

L. V. Harpel Boone

1920 - State Convention (continued)

Preacher of Occasional Sermon	Rev. Otto Raspe	Waterloo
Committee of Fellowship	Rev. O. G. Colegrove	Mitchellville
	Dr. Effie McCollum Jones	Webster City
	Mrs. Ethel Stewart	Grinnell
Superintendent	Rev. O. G. Colegrove	Mitchellville

1921 - State Convention

President	R. S. Galer	Mt. Pleasant
Vice-President	Dr. F. J. Drake	Webster City
Secretary	H. L. Stoughton	Osage
Treasurer	J. E. Reid	Altoona
Trustees	H. B. Cropper	Waterloo
	C. N. Jenkins	Cedar Rapids
	L. V. Harpel	Boone
Preacher of Occasional Sermon	Rev. Laura Bowman Galer	Mt. Pleasant
Committee of Fellowship	Rev. O. G. Colegrove	Mitchellville
	Rev. A. W. Altenbern	Osage
	Dr. F. J. Drake	Webster City
Superintendent	Rev. O. G. Colegrove	Mitchellville
Mid-West Superintendent	Dr. Luther R. Robinson	

1922 - State Convention

President	Roger S. Galer	Mt. Pleasant
Vice-President	Dr. F. J. Drake	Webster City
Secretary	H. L. Stoughton	Osage
Treasurer	J. E. Reid	Altoona
Trustees	H. B. Cropper	Waterloo
	C. N. Jenkins	Cedar Rapids
	L. V. Harpel	Boone
Preacher of Occasional Sermon	Rev. Laura Bowman Galer	Mt. Pleasant
Committee of Fellowship	Rev. O. G. Colegrove	Mitchellville
	Rev. A. W. Altenbern	Osage
	Dr. F. J. Drake	Webster City
State Superintendent	Rev. O. G. Colegrove	Mitchellville
Mid-West Superintendent	Luther R. Robinson	

1923 - State Convention

President	R. S. Galer	Mt. Pleasant
Vice-President	E. P. Prince	Webster City
Secretary	Rev. O. G. Colegrove	Mitchellville
Treasurer	J. E. Reid	Altoona

1923 - State Convention (continued)

Trustees	H. B. Cropper	Waterloo
	C. N. Jenkins	Cedar Rapids
	L. V. Harpel	Boone
Preacher of Occasional Sermon Committee of Fellowship	Rev. E. A. Lewis	Osage
State Superintendent Mid West Supt.	Rev. O. G. Colegrove Dr. Luther R. Robinson	Mitchellville

1924 - State Convention

President	L. V. Harpel	Boone
Vice-President	E. P. Prince	Webster City
Secretary and Superintendent	Rev. O.G. Colegrove	Mitchellville
Treasurer	J. E. Reid	Altoona
Trustees	Arad Hitchcock	Osage
	H. B. Cropper	Waterloo
	R. S. Galer	Mt. Pleasant
Preacher of Occasional Sermon Committee of Fellowship	Rev. F. Ostensacken	Osage
	Rev. O.G. Colegrove	Mitchellville
	Robert Ball	Altoona
	Rev. George Wood	Webster City

1925 - State Convention

President	E. P. Prince	Webster City
Vice-President	L. V. Harpel	Boone
Secretary and Superintendent	Rev. O. G. Colegrove	Mitchellville
Treasurer	J. E. Reid	Altoona
Trustees	Arad Hitchcock	Osage
	H. B. Cropper	Waterloo
	R. S. Galer	Mt. Pleasant
Preacher of Occasional Sermon Committee of Fellowship	Rev. W. O. Bodell	Waterloo
	Rev. O.G. Colegrove	Mitchellville
	Rev. Laura Bowman Galer	Mt. Pleasant
	Robert Ball	Altoona

1926 - State Convention

President	E. P. Prince	Webster City
Vice-President	L. V. Harpel	Boone
Secretary and Superintendent	O.G. Colegrove	Mitchellville
Treasurer	J.E. Reid	Altoona
Trustees	Arad Hitchcock	Osage
	R. S. Galer	Mt. Pleasant
	H. B. Cropper	Waterloo

1926 - State Convention (continued)

Preacher of
Occasional Sermon (none elected)
Committee of
Fellowship (no record of election)

1927 - State Convention

President	E. P. Prince	Webster City
Vice-President	Dr. Effie McCollum Jones	Webster City
Secretary and Superintendent	Rev. O.G. Colegrove	Mitchellville
Treasurer	J. E. Reid	Altoona
Trustees	Arad Hitchcock	Osage
	R. S. Galer	Mt. Pleasant
	H. B. Cropper	Waterloo
Preacher of Occasional Sermon (none elected) Committee of Fellowship	Rev. Laura Bowman Galer	Mt. Pleasant
	Rev. Effie McCollum Jones	Webster City
	I. H. Woodrow	Mitchellville

1928 - State Convention

President	E. P. Prince	Webster City
Vice-President	Dr. Effie McCollum Jones	Webster City
Secretary and Superintendent	Rev. O. G. Colegrove	Mitchellville
Treasurer	J. E. Reid	Altoona
Trustees	Arad Hitchcock	Osage
	R. S. Galer	Mt. Pleasant
	H. B. Cropper	Waterloo
Preacher of Occasional Sermon	Rev. Conard B. Rheiner	Waterloo
Committee of Fellowship	Rev. Laura Bowman Galer	Mt. Pleasant
	Dr. Effie McCollum Jones	Webster City
	I. H. Woodrow	Mitchellville

1929 - State Convention

President	E. P. Prince,	Webster City
Vice-President	Dr. Effie McCollum Jones	Webster City
Secretary and Superintendent	Rev. O.G. Colegrove	Mitchellville
Treasurer	J. E. Reid	Altoona
Trustees	Mrs. H.L. Stoughton	Osage
	Roger S. Galer	Mt. Pleasant
	Mrs. Chas. N. Shane	Waterloo

1929 - State Convention (continued)

Preacher of Occasional Sermon	Rev. Laura Bowman Galer	Mt. Pleasant
Committee of Fellowship	Rev. Laura Bowman Galer Dr. Effie McCollum Jones I. H. Woodrow	Waterloo Webster City Mitchellville

1930 - State Convention

President	E. P. Prince	Webster City
Vice-President	Dr. Effie McCollum Jones	Webster City
Secretary and Superintendent	Rev. O.G. Colegrove	Mitchellville
Treasurer	J. E. Reid	Altoona
Trustees	Mrs. H.L. Stoughton Roger S. Galer Mrs. Chas N. Shane	Osage Mt. Pleasant Waterloo
Preacher of Occasional Sermon	Rev. Edna P. Bruner	Waterloo
Committee of Fellowship	(same as previous year, because there was no record)	

1931 - State Convention

President	H. B. Cropper	Waterloo
Vice-President	Dr. Effie McCollum Jones	Webster City
Secretary and Superintendent	Rev. O. G. Colegrove	Mitchellville
Treasurer	J. E. Reid	Altoona
Trustees	R. S. Galer Mrs. C. N. Shane Mrs. W. L. Stoughton	Mt. Pleasant Waterloo Osage
Preacher of Occasional Sermon	Dr. Effie McCollum Jones	Webster City
Committee of Fellowship	(none listed)	

1932 - State Convention

President	Truman Aldrich	Waterloo
Vice-President	Dr. Effie McCollum Jones	Webster City
Secretary and Superintendent	Rev. O. G. Colegrove	Mitchellville
Treasurer	J. E. Reid	Altoona
Trustees	R. S. Galer Mrs. C. N. Shane Mrs. H. L. Stoughton	Mt. Pleasant Waterloo Osage

1932 - State Convention (continued)

Preacher of Occasional Sermon	Rev. Laura Bowman Galer	Mt. Pleasant
Committee of Fellowship	Mrs. Laura Bowman Galer Dr. Effie McCollum Jones I. H. Woodrow	Mt. Pleasant Webster City Mitchellville

1933 - State Convention

President	Dr. Effie McCollum Jones	Webster City
Vice-President	H. F. Price	Webster City
Secretary	Elva Tucker	Mitchellville
Treasurer	Truman Aldrich	Waterloo
Trustees	Herman Lesch I. H. Woodrow Mrs. C. N. Shane	Osage Mitchellville Waterloo
Preacher of Occasional Sermon	Rev. F. W. Miller	Osage
Committee of Fellowship	Rev. Laura Bowman Galer Rev. F. W. Miller Mr. H. M. Tanner	Mt. Pleasant Osage Mitchellville
Superintendent	Rev. O. G. Colegrove	Mitchellville

1934 - State Convention

President	Dr. Effie McCollum Jones	Webster City
Vice-President	Rev. Edna P. Bruner	Waterloo
Secretary	Elva Tucker	Mitchellville
Treasurer	H. H. Griffiths	Des Moines
Trustees	Mrs. C. N. Shane H. F. Price Herman Lesch	Waterloo Webster City Osage
Preacher of Occasional Sermon	Rev. O. G. Colegrove	Mitchellville
Committee of Fellowship	Rev. Laura Bowman Galer Rev. F. W. Miller Mr. H. M. Tanner	Mt. Pleasant Osage Mitchellville

1935 - State Convention

President	Dr. Effie McCollum Jones	Webster City
Vice-President	Rev. Edna P. Bruner	Waterloo
Secretary	Miss Nellie Housden	Des Moines
Treasurer	Richard Shane	Waterloo
Trustees	E. A. Patterson H. F. Price Mrs. C. N. Shane	Des Moines Webster City Waterloo

1935 - State Convention (continued)		
Preacher of Occasional Sermon	Rev. Edna P. Bruner	Waterloo
Committee of Fellowship Superintendent	(no record) Rev. O.G.Colegrove	Mitchellville
1936 - State Convention		
President	Herman Lesch	Osage
Vice-President	Rev. Edna P. Bruner	Waterloo
Secretary	Mrs. O.S. Franklin	Des Moines
Treasurer	Richard Shane	Waterloo
Trustees	Dr. Effie McCollum Jones	Webster City
	H. F. Price	Webster City
	E. A. Patterson	Des Moines
Preacher of Occasional Sermon	Rev. Jennie Bartholomew Hitchcock	Osage
Committee of Fellowship	Rev. Laura Bowman Galer	Mt. Pleasant
	Rev. Jennie B. Hitchcock	Osage
	Mrs. Maud Shane	Waterloo
Superintendent	Rev. O.G.Colegrove	Mitchellville
1937 - State Convention		
President	Rev. Edna P. Bruner	Waterloo
Vice-President	H. F. Price	Webster City
Secretary	Mrs. Virginia Franklin	Des Moines
Treasurer	Richard Shane	Waterloo
Trustees	Richard Seiberling Dr. Effie McCollum Jones	State Center
	E. A. Patterson	Webster City
Preacher of Occasional Sermon	Rev. O.G.Colegrove	Des Moines
Committee of Fellowship	Rev. Laura Bowman Galer	Mitchellville
	Mrs. C. N. Shane	Mt. Pleasant
	Mrs. Elizabeth Stoughton	Waterloo
	(The Rev. Colegrove closed 19 years as State Superintendent for Iowa)	Osage
1938 - State Convention		
President	Rev. Edna Bruner	Waterloo
Vice-President	Dr. Effie McCollum Jones	Webster City
Secretary	Mrs. Virginia Franklin	Des Moines
Treasurer	Richard Shane	Waterloo

1938 - State Convention (continued)		
Trustees	Harold Davis Leroy Lesch Richard Seiberling	Mt. Pleasant Osage Iowa Falls
Preacher of Occasional Sermon	(none given)	
Committee of Fellowship	Rev. Laura Bowman Galer Mrs. C. N. Shane (third one not listed)	Mt. Pleasant Waterloo
1939 - State Convention		
President	Rev. Edna P. Bruner	Waterloo
Vice-President	Dr. Effie McCollum Jones	Webster City
Secretary	Mrs. Virginia Franklin	Des Moines
Treasurer	Richard Shane	Waterloo
Trustees	Richard Seiberling Harold Davis Leroy Lesch	Iowa Falls Mt. Pleasant Osage
Preacher of Occasional Sermon	(none listed)	
Committee of Fellowship	Rev. Laura Bowman Galer Mrs. Maude Shane	Mt. Pleasant Waterloo
1940 - State Convention		
President	Rev. Edna P. Bruner	Waterloo
Vice-President	Rev. Effie McCollum Jones, D.D.	Webster City
Secretary	Mrs. Virginia H. Franklin	Des Moines
Treasurer	Richard Shane	Waterloo
Trustees	Richard Seiberling Harold Davis Leroy Lesch	Iowa Falls Mt. Pleasant Osage
Committee of Fellowship	(none elected)	
1941 - State Convention		
President	Richard Shane	Waterloo
Vice-President	Dr. Effie McCollum Jones	Webster City
Secretary	Mrs. Virginia H. Franklin	Des Moines
Treasurer	Harold Davis	Mt. Pleasant
Trustees	Mrs. Charles Kammerdiner Richard Seiberling Leroy Lesch	Waterloo Iowa Falls Osage

1941 - State Convention (continued)		
Preacher of Occasional Sermon -		
Committee of Fellowship (none elected)		1
1942 - State Convention		
President	C. Richard Shane	Waterloo
Vice-President	Dr. Effie McCollum Jones	Webster City
Treasurer	Harold Davis	Mt. Pleasant
Secretary	Mrs. Virginia H. Franklin	Des Moines
Trustees	Mrs. Charles Kammerdeiner	Waterloo
	E. P. Prince	Webster City
	Victor Tornquist	Mitchellville
1943 - State Convention		
President	C. Richard Shane	Waterloo
Vice-President	Dr. Effie McCollum Jones	Webster City
Secretary	Mrs. Virginia H. Franklin	Des Moines
Treasurer	Harold Davis	Mt. Pleasant
Trustees	Mrs. Chas Kammer- deiner	Waterloo
	E. P. Prince	Webster City
	Victor Tornquist	Mitchellville

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Universalist Almanac and Universalist Register, Boston, 1843-1893.

Book III, IV, V of Secretary's Records of the Iowa Universalist Convention - 1893-1943.

UNIVERSALIST MINISTERS IN IOWA 1843-1943

T. Abbott	Loomis O. Black
A. J. Adams	W. O. Bodell
J. G. Adams	B. F. Bowles
Mr. Adlard (Unitarian)	Laura Bowman(see Galer)D.D.
A. N. Alcott	W. F. Brattain
Pliny Allen	S. M. Brice
A. W. Altenbern	E. L. Briggs
Mary Garard Andrews	E.T. Briggs
John Arnoup (licentiate)	Mr. Brinkerhoof
C. Arrington	W. C. Brooks
James J. Austin	Mr. Brown
W. C. Ayers	H. W. Brown
Mr. Babcock	Edna P. Bruner
Harriet I. Baker	Benjamin Brunning
J. R. Baker	W. D. Buchanan
W. S. Balch	David P. Bunn
Thomas Ballinger	J. W. Burrough
J. H. Ballou	H. B. Butler
Mr. Barret	Mr. Caldwell
A. C. Barry, D.D.	John Casady
Jennie Bartholomew (see Hitchcock)	J. S. Cantwell
Mr. Bashor	J. W. Chaffin
W. S. Bates	W. R. Chamberlin
A. K. Beem	Augusta J. Chapin, D.D.
S. R. H. Biggs	E. H. Chapin
Joy Bishop	H. V. Chase
	Almira Cheney
	James Alvin Clark

J. N. Clark	J. L. Dinsmore
S. C. Clark	C. F. Dodge
W. T. Clark	Mabel Dotter (licentiate)
S. J. Clarkson	Thomas E. Dotter
Oscar Clute (Unitarian)	H. B. Drew (Baptist, served C. R. parish)
H. Cole	James Eastwood
William R. Cole	T. C. Eaton
Minnie O. Colegrove	Isa A. Eberhart
Osgood G. Colegrove	A. C. Edmonds
Mr. Conant (Unitarian)	M. L. Edwards
E. L. Conger	G. Dean Ellenwood
Asa Countryman	T. Elliott
John S. Cook, D.D.	Sumner Ellis
Z. Cook	L. C. Esperson
T. W. Critchett	M. L. Estey
Amos Crum, D.D.	Eliza Curtis Everton
Sophronia L. Crum	Joseph Everton
George Crum	J. Leroy Everton
Eliza Curtis (see Everton)	L. Fairchild
J. P. Curtiss	J. H. Farnsworth
T. H. Darnelle	F. Faukes
E. Darnielle	Paul P. Felt
W. F. Davis	A. J. Fishback
W. M. DeLong	L. B. Fisher, D.D.
J. S. Dennis	T. B. Fisher
Mr. Dickson	William Fisher
Alva Dinsmore	G. F. Flanders

L. J. Fletcher	A. C. Grier
Marianna T. Folsom	John Gurley
Frank Forbes (licentiate)	Mary Hadley
J. E. Forrester	E. E. Hammond
J. B. Fosher	R. G. Hamilton
Eben Francis	J. W. Hanson, D.D.
J. R. Freeman	Joseph Harsh
T. A. Freeman	N. A. Haskell (Unitarian)
Laura Bowman Galer, D.D.	P. Hathaway
Mary A. Garard (see Andrews)	H. L. Haywood
A. R. Gardner	Matthias Heilig
Joel C. Garretson	W. J. Herbener
Mr. Gaylord	Joshua W. Hicks
Dr. Geddes*	C. W. Hillstrom
Karl Gerner (liberal but not Universalist)	Mr. Hines
J. M. Getchell	Jennie Bartholomew Hitchcock
Sophie Gibbs	M. H. Houghton
C. K. Gibson	J. A. Hoyt
H. L. F. Gillespie	John Hughes
Fidelia Gillette	Mrs. John Hughes
J. B. Gilman	Benjamin Hull
James Gorton	Manning Hull
G. S. Gowdy	J. E. Huston
Mrs. G. S. Gowdy (licentiate)	C. T. Irish
Charles Graves	Henry Jewell
John Archer Gray	Ben Wallace Jones
E. Green	Effie McCollum Jones, D.D.

Leon P. Jones	W. E. Manley
Paul Jordan	L. B. Mason
S. A. Kelsey	W. W. Merritt
Isaac Kelso	F. W. Miller
John Edward Keyes	D. W. Morey
L. H. Keyes	E. Morris
W. W. King	John Mulholland
Joseph Kinney	W. C. Myers
Florence Kollock	C. Ellwood Nash, D.D.
C. A. Lander	C. P. Nash
Mr. Larson	H. E. Newton
W. C. Leavitt	Joseph Fort Newton, D.D.
W. E. Leavitt	W. W. Nutting
Prudy LeClerc	George G. Odiorne
John Clarence Lee	G. Oldener
H. Lewellen	Margaret Titus Olmstead
E. A. Lewis	Rett E. Olmstead
W. B. Linnell	H. J. Orelup
M. L. Linton	F. Oesten-Sacken
D. P. Livermore, D.D.	J. H. Palmer
Mary A. Livermore	J. N. Pardee
James L. Long (licentiate)	Mattie Hulet Parry
George Longbrake	W. P. Payne
Arthur W. McDavitt	Mrs. W. P. Payne (licentiate)
W. H. McGlaufflin, D.D.	Alfred Peck
L. C. McLaughlin	D. P. Peck
Erasmus Manford, D.D.	F. D. Pierce

William Pierce	E. R. Sanborn
E. M. Pingree	J. P. Sanford
C. A. Polson	T. J. Severs
Charlotte Porter	A. M. Shimer
L. S. Porter	J. F. Shindler
LeGrand Powers	Q. H. Shinn, D.D.
W. A. Pratt	H. F. Shook
R. H. Pullman	G. W. Skilling (Unitarian)
Agnes Ralph	H. Slade
W. S. Ralph	Aaron Smith
Otto Raspe	H. W. Smith
D. M. Reed	N. P. Smith
Curtis Reese (Unitarian), D.D.	Philander Smith
Edson Reifsnider	B. F. Snook
Verna Reinghans	H. O. Sommers
W. A. Render (licentiate)	N. E. Spicer
Conard C. Rheiner	Joshua Spooner
Harry C. Richardson	J. Stebbins
Shelton Riley	George B. Stocking
Arthur Roberts	Maria A. Straub
Luther Riley Robinson, D.D.	W. L. Swan
D. H. Rogan	A. H. Sweetzer
B. C. Rogers	T. H. Tabor
B. F. Rogers	Simeon L. Taylor
Daniel Rose	Aaron A. Thayer
Mary Safford	H. L. Thornton
J. R. Sage	A. R. Tillinghast
N. L. Sage, D.D.	B. M. Tillotson

D. C. Tomlinson

A. J. Torsleff

Robert H. Towne

Rev. Turrell, D.D.

O. F. Van Cise

C. E. Varney

A. Vedder

Charles L. Waite

S. Wakefield

W. B. Washburn

George S. Weaver

C. P. West

I. M. Westfall

H. K. White

Ernest Whitesmith

Miss Whitney

Herbert Whitney

S. E. Whitney

C. Wilcox

Fletcher Wilson

T. Wilson

Wallace A. Williams

Matt Wing

E. R. Wood

George Wood

Mr. Woodbury

C. Woodhouse

T. W. Woodrow

F. M. Yates

F. H. York

Gustave Zastrow

Mr. Zornes

WOMEN MINISTERS IN IOWA 1843-1943

Mary Garard Andrews	Jennie Bartholomew Hitchcock
Harriet I. Baker	Kate Hughes
Edna P. Bruner	Effie McCollum Jones, D.D.*
Augusta J. Chapin, D.D. *	Florence Kollock
Almira Cheney	Prudy LeClerc
Minnie O. Colegrove	Mary A. Livermore
Sophronia L. Crum	Margaret T. Olmstead
Mabel Dotter (licentiate)	Mattie Hulet Parry
Eliza Curtis Everton	Mrs. W. P. Payne (licentiate)
Marianna T. Folsom	Charlotte Porter
Laura Bowman Galer, D.D.	Agnes Ralph
Sophie Gibbs	Verna Reinghans
Fidelia Woolley Gillette	Mary Safford (Unitarian)
Mrs. G.S. Gowdy (licentiate)	Maria Straub
Mary Hadley	Miss Whitney

*Augusta J. Chapin was the first woman in America to be given the honorary degree of Doctor of Divinity, and Effie McCollum Jones was the third to receive this recognition.

IOWA UNIVERSALIST CONVENTION

RECORD OF PARISHES

	Convention Appearance	Fellowship	Last Appearance
Albia	1855		1855
Algona	1878		1892
Anamosa	1849		1874
Afton	1874		1874
Agricola	1874		1874
Bentonsport	1856		1856
Boyllies Mill	1851		1851
Bedford	1870	1870	1871
Bloomfield	1872	1872	1904
Brooklyn	1874		1874
Belle Plaine	1867	1868	1887
Blairstown	1874		1874
Boone or Boonesboro	1867	1870	
Bertram	1886		
Brandon	1870	1870	1870
Buckingham	1861	1870	1870
Burlington	1844	1845	1850
Big Mound	1861		1861
Belmond	1895		1896
Birmingham	1898		1898
Cedar Falls	1864	1880	1896
Cedar Rapids	1850	1854-70	1920
Centre Point	1874		1874
Chariton	1874		1874
Clarinda	1867	1868	1900
Clear Creek	1867	1867-68	1868
Clyde	1869	1869	1869
Charles City	1891	1891	1896
Castalia	1882		1896
Clinton	1871	1871	1904
Creston	1898		1898
Chelsea	1879		1881
Dakota City	1882		1882
Des Moines	1850	1867-68	1894
Dexter	1871	1871	1876
Dubuque	1843	1852-66 83	1896
Davenport	1850		1850
De Witt	1865		1865
English River	1848		1854
Earlville	1869		1871
East Nordway	1869		1869
Elkader	1864	1868	1896
Eddyville	1856	1856	1856
Eldora	1866	1868-70	1899
Ft. Dodge	1892		1892
Fairfield	1848		1850

	Convention Appearance	Fellowship	Last Appearance
Fletchers Grove	1871		1871
Forrestville	1872	1872	1872
Grinnell	1871	1871	1896
Greeley	1868	1869	1907
Hampton	1889		1889
Harvey	1875		1875
Highland	1863		1869
Harrisburg	1850		1850
Iowa Falls	1891	1891	1905
Iowa City	1843	1843	1895
Independence	1858	1868	1868
Jackson	1849	1868	1879
Knoxville	1867	1879	1882
Linnville	1874		1874
Logan	1874		1874
Laporte	1869		1869
LeClare	1850	1851	1851
La Motte	1871		1871
Lima	1855		1855
Lebanon	1865		1865
Montana (see Boone)			
Muscatine or			
Bloomington	1843	1844-56	1856
Mt. Union	1898		1898
Manchester	1867	1869	1905
Marion	1855		1872
Mt. Pleasant	1848	1848	
Maquoketa	1870	1870	1885
Marshalltown	1862	1879	1900
Mitchellville	1863	1868	
Milton	1855		1855
Newell	1884	1884	1884
Newton	1867	1868-70	1882
Nevada	1869	1870	1892
New Sharon	1875	1878	1896
Northwood	1897	1897	1904
Union Grove	1863	1863	1863
Ossian	1896		1896
Osceola	1874		1874
Osage	1870	1870	
Oskaloosa	1850	1851-68	1882
Otranto	1883	1883	1900
Ottumwa	1853	1854	1856
Oelwein	1892		1892
Pleasant Valley	1850	1851	1853
Panora	1867	1868	1868
Pomeroy	1891		1891
Prairie Ridge			
Red Oak	1869		1897
Rochester	1848		1848
Shenandoah	1896		1914

	Convention Appearance	Fellowship	Last Appearance
Strawberry Point	1860		1909
Salem	1850	1851	1851
Sumner	1867	1868	1868
Shells---	1869		1869
Storm Lake	1874		1905
Sac City	1874		1874
Steamboat Rock	1870		1870?
Searsboro	1874		1874
Stuart	1883	1883	1884
String Prairie	1846	1846	1848
Tipton	1848	1871	1871
Victor	1874		1874
Vinton	1864	1869	1874
Viola	1867	1868-70	1886
Van Buren	1864	1870?	1870
Villisca	1869	1869	1874
Wapello	1855		1855
Webster City	1874	1885	
Wheatland	1874		1874
Wilton	1872		1886
Wyoming	1870	1870	1870
Waverly	1875		1886
Washington	1878		1878
West Union	1882	1882	1909
Waterloo	1867	1868-83	
Wapsinonack	1848		1854
West Liberty	1850	1851	1852
Waukon	1862		1862
Oregon	1865		1865?
Moingona	1869	1869	1869
East Grove	1850-65		1850
Edenville	1882		1882?

Total Number 124

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* Iowa Universalist Convention, President's Notebook -
(compiled from Secretary's Journal, Vol. 1, 2 and 3).

There was no state convention record of the following, but the General Convention reported there were churches with properties:

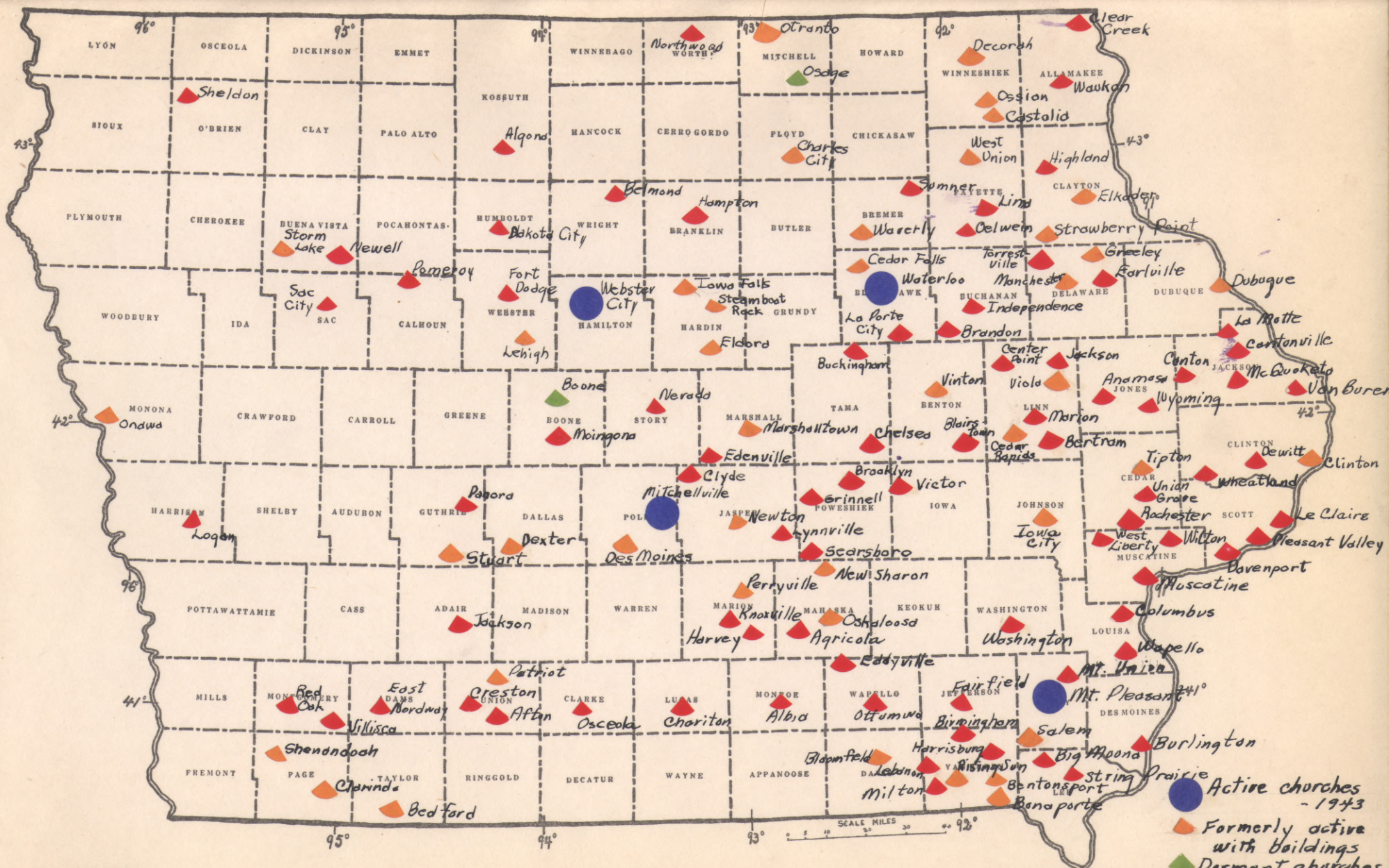
- | | |
|---------------|---|
| 1. Canton | Value in 1873, \$1,200.00 |
| 2. Decorah | (Perhaps just a lot)
Value \$400.00 in 1873 |
| 3. Lehigh | Value in 1883, \$1,200.00 |
| 4. Onowa | (Perhaps just a lot)
Value in 1873, \$200.00 |
| 5. Rising Sun | (A real church - 1841) |
| 6. Patriot | (One of the best churches - 1841) |
| 7. Perryville | (60 members - 1841) |

Societies reported to the General Convention but not in the state records:

1. Burr Oak
2. Cottonville
3. Columbus
4. Mondamin

Those societies reported to the State Convention but which do not appear on the map because the State Historical Society has no record of such towns:

1. Prairie Ridge
2. Boylies Mill
3. English River
4. Fletchers Grove

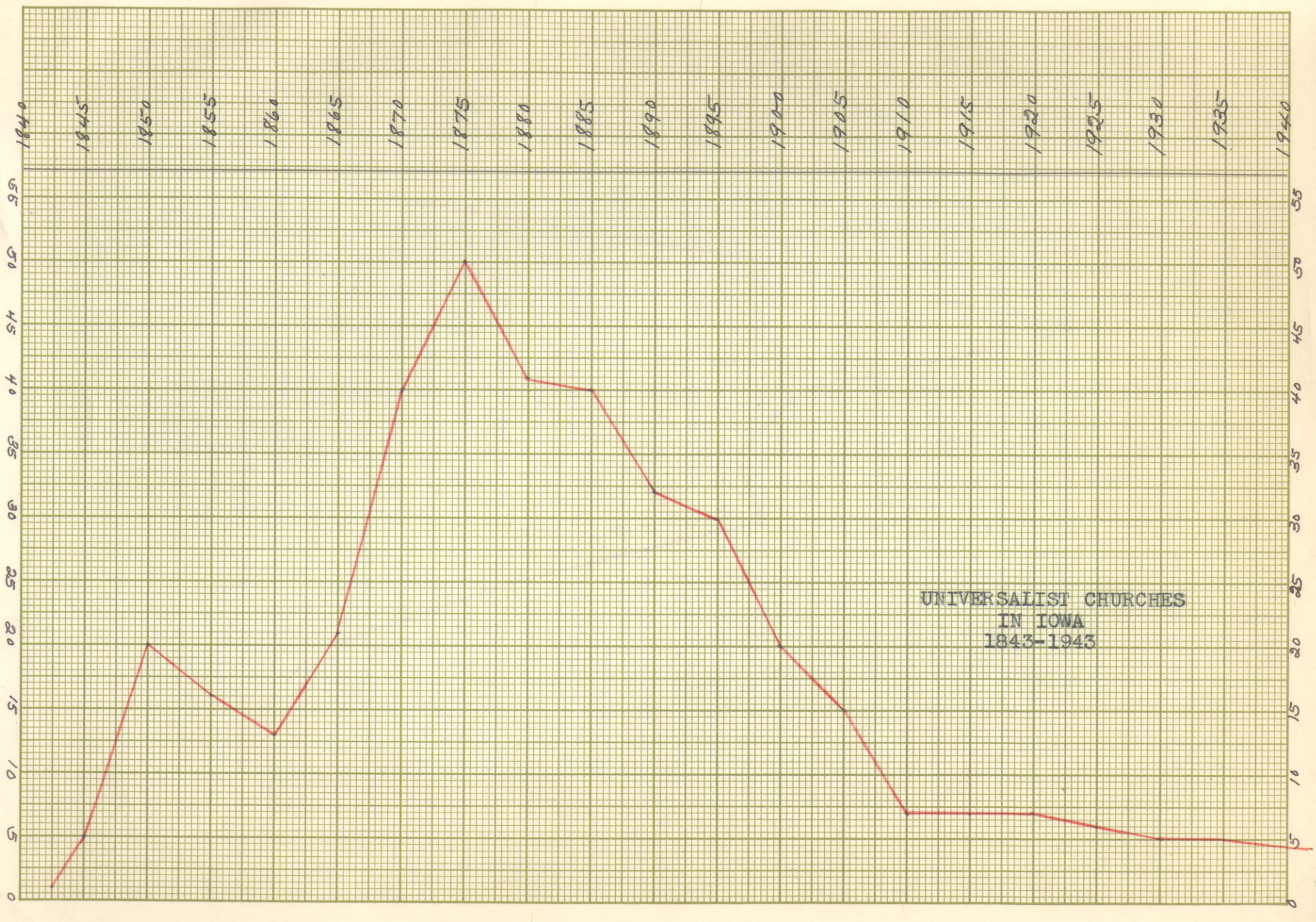


- Active churches - 1943
- ◆ Formerly active with buildings
- ◆ Dormant churches with buildings
- ◆ Formerly organized societies and preaching sites

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Universalist Churches in Iowa 1843-1943

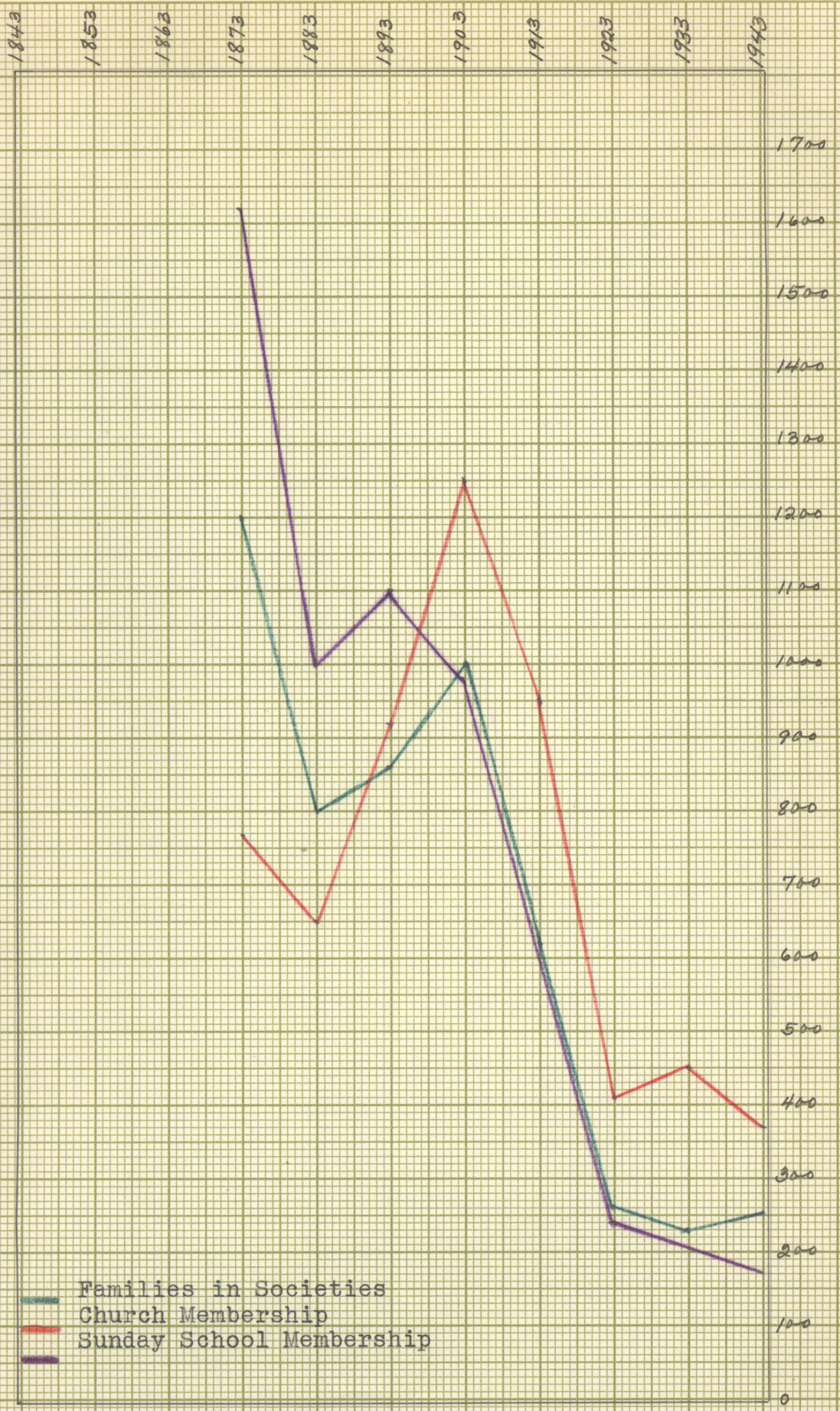
* I.U.C. President's Notebook (Location of some earlier societies unknown)



UNIVERSALIST CHURCHES
IN IOWA
1843-1943



THE UNIVERSALIST CHURCH IN IOWA: 1843-1943



THE UNIVERSALIST CHURCH IN IOWA: 1843-1943