

SPIRE OF UNIVERSALIST SWAYS BUT IS DECLARED SAFE;
STREET IS ROPED OFF

One of the most interesting phases of the wind storm was the terror inspired through fear that the spire of the first Universalist Church would topple into the street. It swayed through an arc estimated at 18 inches, and the Street Department roped off the surrounding area and stationed police to divert traffic.

Fire Marshal George S. Coneybear and Chief of Police William C. Bell went up in the spire and carefully examined it. They reported that it is in perfectly safe condition. The timbers are sound and the bolts that stay it are firm and secure.

Wilbur B. Barnes has examined the spire many times in the past year and scouts the idea that it will fall under any conditions likely to happen. He states that a wooden spire always sways in the wind because of the flexibility of the wood. Observers have watched this spire weave in the wind for many years, but as a citizen remarked today: "I would hate to be condemned to stand in the street and watch it until it falls."

The tower on the old Second Presbyterian Church in South Street was observed to bend before the wind, and this is a much more stocky and shorter superstructure than the spire on the Universalist Church. The spire of the First Methodist Church also bent visibly before the strong blasts.

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Transcribed on 23 Dec 2009 by Karen E. Dau of Rochester, NY