

[Downey, Edward C.]

REV. DOWNEY, AGED 77, DIES IN CORTLAND

Winthrop—Relatives and friends at Fort Jackson and Winthrop received word Wednesday of the death of the Rev. Edward C. Downey, 77, a retired Universalist minister, in his home in Cortland, where he had been ill for many months.

Rev. Mr. Downey was born in Fort Jackson, Apr. 29, 1870, one of five children of William and Sarah Van Ornum Downey. He attended Potsdam State Normal School, then taught for several years, later going to the Canton Theological School, where he was graduated in 1896. Three summer courses at Harvard College completed his collegiate preparation.

He joined the Winthrop Universalist Church, Nov. 13, 1892. He was ordained to the Universalist ministry in Northfield, Vt., in 1896, and in this pastorate he was married to Miss Grace L. Shaw of Rochester, N. Y.

He had since held pastorates in Spencer, Mass. [and] Spokane, Wash., and on his first Sunday in the West he conducted services in a small hall above a saloon, with a congregation of 15 adults and 15 children. Under his leadership the movement soon grew with congregations averaging two hundred. A brick church was erected in the center of the city with a parsonage on the same location.

In his eighth year of service, he suffered serious injury by a fall from the roof of his home and withdrew from the ministry for a year. He was called to the pastorate of the Universalist Church in Barre, Vt., and answered with a three years' pastorate, leaving to accept a call to the Church of the Messiah at Portland, Me., where he greatly increased the congregation and led in the renovating of the edifice and the increase in endowment.

He was called to the church in Norwood, Mass., in 1914 and did excellent work for the six years he served there. Two sons, Norman and Edward were born to the couple.

Rev. Mr. Downey next was called to Grace Church in Lowell, Mass., where the membership jumped from 59 to 255.

The serious illness of Mrs. Downey necessitated the location in a smaller village. In Concord, Mich., her death occurred in 1927.

The sons, both graduates of St. Lawrence University, urged their father to return to the east and Rev. Mr. Downey accepted a call to the church in Nunda, N. Y. in 1930. The following year he married Miss Louise L. Lovell on Feb. 25, 1931.

Their pastorate in Cortland, N.Y., began in 1934, where he met with marked success and made many repairs to the church and the parsonage. He had the love of the young people and it is said of him "as a preacher, he is among the greatest of today."

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Among Masons, he has been honored with the 32nd degree. Ill health necessitated his resignation from serving the church in November, 1943, but the society continued the use of the parsonage since that time for the beloved pastor and his wife.

Two brothers and a sister have passed away, all in Fort Jackson, William, Hubert E. and Mrs. Cassius (Emma) Showys.

Surviving besides his wife are two sons, one, Major Edward S., who served in World War 2, and Norman; also one brother George Dell Downey, 86, of Fort Jackson, and several nieces and nephews in this vicinity.

Arrangements for the funeral were not complete at the time the death notice was received, but it is probable that services and internment will be held in Cortland, where he made a legion of friends during his nine years' pastorate.

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