

[Betts, Mary R. Browning]

MRS. MARY BROWNING BETTS, WIDOW OF REV. DR. BETTS,  
DIES AT HOME AFTER LONG ILLNESS

Nearly Half Century in Syracuse Marked by Active Share in  
Growth of What Is Now Betts Memorial Church

Mrs. Mary Browning Betts, widow of the Rev. Dr. Frederick W. Betts, who served 42 years as pastor of the First Universalist Church (now Betts Memorial Universalist Church), and mother of Fred Betts, Syracuse Herald columnist, died at 2 o'clock Tuesday morning at the family home, 1125 Midland Ave.

Mrs. Betts had been ill about 10 weeks. She was 80 years old.

She was born in the town of Onondaga, passing her early life and the first years of her marriage there. She became acquainted with Dr. Betts when he was a youthful carpenter who had come to make repairs at her house. Their romance was the beginning of a joint career which was to include many years of devoted service to the Universalist Church.

When Dr. Betts decided to turn from his trade to theology, Mrs. Betts accompanied him when he attended the Canton Theological School at St. Lawrence University.

Dr. Betts was 27 years old when he embarked on his clerical career at Plymouth, N.H. After a few months there, Dr. and Mrs. Betts went to Palmer, Mass., but several years later they returned to Syracuse where both spent the rest of their lives in the service of the church.

During the 42 years that Dr. Betts was pastor of the First Universalist Church, Mrs. Betts worked with him unceasingly to help him achieve his high aims. She was always a helpful companion in his pursuit of many varied interests.

Following Dr. Betts' death on March 4, 1932, Mrs. Betts continued to take an active part in the programs of First Universalist Church. After Dr. Betts' death, the church was renamed the Betts Memorial Universalist Church of Syracuse. It is situated at South Warren and East Adams Streets. The Rev. Ellsworth C. Reamon is its present pastor.

Dr. and Mrs. Betts observed their golden wedding anniversary on Oct. 1, 1928.

Mrs. Betts was honored many times during her life by the congregation of the Universalist Church as well as Syracuse civic and social leaders. The Mary Browning Betts Circle of Kings Daughters was named after her. On March 29, 1936, alumni, members and friends of the Young People's Christian Union of the church gathered at a breakfast to pay tribute to her.

During an active career, Dr. Betts gained wide recognition as a clergyman, civic leader, philanthropist, writer and trustee of varied religious, educational and welfare interests.

Besides her son, Mrs. Betts is survived by a grandson, Browning Betts of Baltimore, Md., and a niece, Mrs. L. C. Willson, who recently had made her home with Mrs. Betts.

Friends may call at the home Wednesday afternoon between 2 and 5 o'clock. Prayer service will be conducted at the home Thursday afternoon at 2 o'clock followed by a funeral service in Betts Memorial Church at 2:30 o'clock. The Rev. Ellsworth C. Reamon, pastor, will officiate. Burial will be in Oakwood Cemetery.

*Syracuse Herald*, Syracuse NY, Tue. 15 Feb 1938