

[Cushing, Stella Marek]

MRS. STELLA MAREK CUSHING

The newspapers reported the death of Mrs. Samuel T. Cushing of Montclair, N.J., on April 14. This means that Stella Marek Cushing is dead and it is something almost unbelievable. Our own Stella Marek Cushing with her violin, her music, her interpretive songs and her dances is silenced by death—it may be physically true but we can still see and hear this charming artist.

Born in New York City to parents who had emigrated from Czechoslovakia, she became a child-genius with the violin. The family moved to Worcester, Mass., and Stella was one of the children in the First Universalist Church. Dr. Vincent E. Tomlinson, the pastor, and others showed a deep interest and love for this child and she never forgot this affection. She openly acknowledged her indebtedness to the Universalist faith and church as an obligation on which she was happily making payments but which she would never be able to pay in full. She was always generous in contributing her programs to our churches and organizations, to the Wayside Inn Retreat of Universalist ministers and other organizations and she did it generally without charge when her booking agency was charging a large fee for other engagements.

The years passed and Stella Marek seemed always to have her violin with her. The two were inseparable. After the World War, her talent reached its height. Always she sought to present her people, the Bohemians, in their true light, not as the term, "Bohemian," implied. She made frequent trips to Europe and returned with songs, music, costumes and stories to be worked into her programs. She appeared in many cities of the East as well as Chautauqua and the Town Hall of New York City. The government of Czechoslovakia conferred upon her the order of the White Lion, last June, in recognition of her outstanding success in presenting the culture of the Slav. She regarded herself as a messenger of good will and brotherhood and her many audiences received her with a sincere and enthusiastic appreciation. She is survived by her husband, Samuel T. Cushing; a son [Donald], a sister [prob. Olga] and a brother [Charles]. Mr. Cushing is a former president of the National Y.P.C.U. and has served the Universalist cause in other offices.

*Empire State Universalist, Cortland NY, May 1938*