

**A Brief History
of the
Work of Universalist Women
1869 to 1955**

Ida M. Folsom, Editor

The Association of Universalist Women

1955

Condensed and edited by Ellen Spencer

Unitarian Universalist Women's Federation

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25 Beacon Street Boston, MA 02108

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Introduction to the 1955 Edition

This little book, which tells the story of the founding and development of the women's organization of the Universalist Church, was first published in 1945, the year of its Jubilee Anniversary. It seemed fitting, in celebration of such an occasion, that some account of the work in which Universalist women had been engaged for 75 years should be published and made available to the contemporary membership. Miss Ida Folsom, at that time Executive Director of the Association, served as both historian and chronicler for the undertaking.

So generally appreciated and so widely used has the result of her effort been that a decade later the first printing is exhausted and a new edition a compelling necessity. Re-edited and brought up to date by Miss Folsom, this new book presents to the members of The Association of Universalist Women the story of its 85 years of continuous and expanding service. May it serve the dual purpose of commemorating past accomplishment and inspiring to new endeavor!

— *Laura S. Hersey*

An Appreciation

Grateful appreciation is hereby given the following women who rendered particular service in the editing of this material as it has appeared in *The Bulletin*: Mrs. Marietta B. Wilkins, Salem, Mass.; Mrs. Mary Grace Canfield, Woodstock, Vt.; Mrs. Harry Adams Hersey, Danbury, Conn.; Mrs. Theresa Homet Patterson, Pasadena, Calif.; Mrs. Ethel M. Allen Columbus, Ohio.

"75 Years Onward"

Introduction to the 1993 Edition

This edition of the *Work of Universalist Women* was prepared in celebration of two anniversaries: the 200th anniversary of Universalism in America, and the 30th anniversary of the consolidation of the Association of Universalist Women and the Alliance of Unitarian Women into the Unitarian Universalist Women's Federation. Grateful acknowledgement is made to the Universalist Bicentennial Committee for underwriting the printing costs; without this support this edition would have had to have been heavily cut instead of lightly condensed. This history is being distributed by the committee in its mailing to all UU congregations and by the UUWF as a gift to its members.

Since this edition is in the nature of a reprint of a historical document, the language of the original has been retained. No attempt has been made to degenderize such terms as chairman or to bring titles such as Miss and Mrs. into line with current usage. The tenses in which this voice speaks to us, from 1955, are also those of the original.

An attempt has been made to make the work more accessible to readers who may not have much knowledge of Universalist history by expanding the text to clarify distinctions between committees, departments, programs, positions, or meetings of the Universalist women's organization and those of the Universalist Church. Information has also been added about some individuals with whom the original audience for this book would have been familiar, but who are not so readily identifiable to the contemporary reader.

— *Ellen Spencer*

1869-1905

On the 75th anniversary of the establishment of the women's program in our denomination, it seemed only fitting to attempt to publicly record some of the major achievements of those years. Perhaps this is a service we owed to interdenominational history, since we have the distinction of being the first of the denominations in which women effected an organization for specific work independent of the general assembly of the church. We had, then, a pioneer history to write, only the first chapter of which has yet been attempted.

The author's desk was piled high with a complete file of yellowed, old record books, and the air was aromatic with the dank, musty smell which enveloped them in the vault of the uptown branch of the First National Bank of Boston, Mass., where they had quietly lain these many years. It was from such an atmosphere that these records came to light again to give us satisfaction of the past and challenge to the future.

As to be expected, the records were not as complete as a historian might wish. Secretaries through the years have an annoying way of elaborating on those things which are interesting, but not significant, and of forgetting to follow up in their notes the controversial and the policy setting issues. Be that as it may, reading leads one to see that the early association was born of an idea to serve the church, and for a time was content with a year-by-year service, answering the financial needs as they seemed to arise throughout our Zion.

The first national organization of Universalist women was effected at the 1869 annual convention of Universalists in Buffalo, N.Y., as an aid to the General Convention—the governing body of the Universalist Church—in raising the John Murray Fund of \$200,000, which was to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the first sermon preached by Murray in America. At the first meeting Mrs. D.C. Tomlinson was elected chairman, Mrs. F.J.M. Whitcomb, secretary, and prayer was offered by Mrs. Eliza Bailey. Mrs. Caroline A. Soule explained the purpose of the meeting, and after a two-hour discussion an organization was formed and given the name: The Women's Centenary Aid Association.

The sole objective for this temporary organization was to raise \$35,000 of the proposed \$200,000 to assist the church

in one of its first unified projects. There was no thought in the minds of those loyal women, as they gathered in the vestry of the Buffalo church to discuss what they might do to help, that they were launching a significant thing, or that the movement would eventually outgrow the mere money-raising stage and later embody a program of education. So conscious were they of the need for church extension that they set a pattern for nearly 50 years to come—a pattern which still dominates a large number of our groups. That women's sole work in the church is to raise money to further extend the work of the church was the framework of that pattern.

The first national public meeting of Universalist women was held in Gloucester, Mass., September 21, 1870. The organization, effective for the year, was to have been dissolved at this time, but "a portion of the records being defective," it was unanimously "decided to continue to 1871" to prepare a resume and "to officially dissolve." At this meeting, the remarkable achievement of these women was reported. Let us remember that they started with no organization to back their pledge, which seems considerable even in these days. Thirteen thousand Universalist women, with gifts ranging from \$1 to \$300 (one with \$1,000) raised, during 1869-1870, \$35,974. The expenses incident to the collection, including travel, were \$774. The pledge was raised, the bills paid, and of the small remaining sum, \$200 was given to the women of the Buffalo church to apply to a building fund, their church having burned shortly after the 1869 convention. Thus ended all but the final dissolution of the temporary organization, the first united effort of the Universalist women.

When the Universalist General Convention met in Philadelphia in 1871, the women attended with the purpose of closing up the affairs of The Women's Centenary Aid Association, but when they convened in what was their second annual meeting, they were so committed to the importance of working together for the denomination's common good that they decided to reorganize as an independent organization, and voted that whatever money was raised should be under their own control and at their own disposition. They voted to drop the word aid from their original name and became The Women's Centenary Association. There were some who opposed this independent

action and refused to join the reorganized body. Here, in the second year, we find the beginning of the years of segregation of interests which had, in 1939, divided Universalist women into two significant groups: a group of a few thousand members who have kept alive the traditions and policies of the church and who had made the name Universalist stand for something approaching its real meaning in the world, and the much larger number who had concerned themselves with the work of the local church and specific home interests.

In September 1873, a charter was obtained under a special Act of Congress, as required with all organizations chartered in the district of Columbia. It declared that "the object of the Association is to promote the interests of the Universalist Church." At this same time the first constitution and bylaws were adopted, defining the object of the Association in more specific terms: "To assist weak parishes, foster Sunday Schools, help educate worthy young students for the ministry, relieve the needs of disabled preachers, ministers' wives and orphans, distribute denominational literature, and to do both home and foreign missionary work."

Mrs. Soule was placed in the field, as agent, to interest women in the work of church extension and to collect such funds as possible. She traveled widely, speaking and taking pledges. Over \$25,000 was raised that year, the Illinois branch alone contributing \$5,000 toward the building of a women's dormitory at Lombard College, Galesburg, Ohio. One thousand dollars was given to Jefferson Liberal Institute, Jefferson, Wis., and in response to a request from Buchtel College, Akron, Ohio, an effort was made to raise \$20,000 for a professorship for women in that then Universalist institution. Mrs. Soule canvassed Ohio and western Pennsylvania, and the entire sum was pledged. Of that amount General James Pierce, Sharpsville, Penn., gave \$10,000 in the name of Mrs. Pierce. It will be remembered that the great financial panic of the 1870s came in 1873. As a result some of the pledges did not materialize, but the Centenary Association paid \$16,000 to the college, and because of the large individual gift made by General Pierce, the professorship was named the Chloe Pierce Chair. This chair was occupied by women until 1905, Miss Maria Parsons being the first to hold it.

At the 1872 Universalist convention in Cincinnati, a representative of Scottish Universalists was present and appealed for funds for the converts of James Rely, the preacher who made a Universalist of John Murray in England. Friendliness ran high for our spiritual kin across the sea, and a gift of \$600 was made to them by the General Convention. From that time on, and for several years, interest in the Scottish mission was a considerable factor in the work of the Centenary Association.

It raised thousands of dollars for this missionary enterprise, which included activities at Dunfermline, Glasgow, and Larbert, providing a considerable share of the running expenses of the mission as well as supplying the minister and helping with the building of the Larbert Church. In 1874 Mrs. Soule's health broke down. She was urged to take an extended rest, and a long voyage was suggested. She had previously given up her connection with *The Ladies' Repository*, *The Guiding Star*, and the *Myrtle* of which she was editor, and resigned from the staff of *The New York Tribune*, in order that she might devote her entire time to an expansion and promotion of the Centenary Association work. Her physical breakdown, however, was turned to good account and she sailed for Scotland in 1875 as the "accredited evangel" of the Centenary Association. Upon her return to America she took up her active field work again and served until 1878, when she accepted the call to the church at Stenhousemuir Larbert. The Scottish Convention conferred upon Mrs. Soule the rite of ordination, and she became the first woman ever ordained to the Christian ministry in Europe. She served until 1880 and again briefly, later in the 1880s. The last missionary to Scotland from the Centenary Association was the Rev. Charles O. Garst, sent in 1892, who served two years. An old record chronicles this closing fact: "This ended the connection of our Association with the work in Scotland, for a little later dissensions between the older and younger members of the Glasgow church caused a break, and the building was finally sold." The proceeds from the sale were placed in the Permanent Fund and were later drawn against to make good the Association's vote of \$1,000 payable to the Denver Church Building Fund. It will be of interest that P.T. Barnum, of circus fame and a devoted Universalist, gave generously to the Scottish program. One item from an

old records reveals that he "paid the year's ground rent at Larbert."

The records show that antagonism toward the separate organization for women continued throughout the early years. In 1873 "some discussion had been indulged in by certain well meaning brethren regarding the independent action of women in religious and church affairs which at times waxed warm." Some of the elders of the church had a feeling that the women were dividing the loyalty. Early letters show that "these zealous defenders of man's prerogative searched for the great bugaboo of illegality in the constitution." None could be found, but the argument went on for several years. It was contended that the General Convention was in a better position to invest and spend money than an auxiliary body of women, and that better work could be done under one organization than under two. An examination of the finances for the past 75 years will discount the first statement, because never in its long history has the Association been subsidized and only one record is made of a loan being negotiated outside of its own funds. As to the second, one can only say that the years have shown the women to be zealous advocates of a strict missionary program which they, as churchwomen, intend to see carried out in the name of the church.

An early historian credits the "first missionary work of the Association" to be "printing and distribution of tracts expressing in forceful language our faith and the reasons therefore." In the first 12 years of its history, "Four and one-half million pages were sent wherever the mails would go." The records mention Mexico, Central America, Australia, England, and Scotland. Another notation cites: "A large consignment was made to the East Indies, China, Japan and the islands of the sea." There is also a reference to the fact that this latter shipment was personally supervised by an interested person, unfortunately unnamed, so that the tracts reached the principal cities of these countries and islands. The authors of these pamphlets included seven of the outstanding ministers of the period, with Mrs. Soule the only woman contributor. The women had not yet gained enough confidence in their own talent to provide their own literature, or perhaps the reason lay in the fact that one of the prime objectives, as stated at the General Convention of 1873, was "to divide the load" with the Convention. These tracts served the total church, while it is evident that literature provided by

the women might have served only the women's program. Distribution of literature in these early days followed the pattern of evangelism and the idea was to "spread the gospel." For the Centennial Exposition in Philadelphia in 1876, "quantities of tracts were placed in all railway stations and other public places, and the boxes especially placed for the purpose were filled daily." The last sentence, taken from an old record, would indicate that the people of that period were eager for the liberal philosophy.

The General Convention recognized The Women's Centenary Association in 1877 by electing Mrs. George B. Marsh of Chicago, Ill., to the Board of Trustees. She served until 1885, and then again from 1889-1893. Then there was a long gap, during which the women's association continued to serve the church and to follow its lead in missionary endeavor, but without any representation on the official board of the church. Perhaps this fact, more than any other, accounts for the separateness with which these two significant bodies function, a routine which became a habit during the swift-moving middle years of our history.

During the 1870s the Centenary Association turned its sporadic attention to a wide variety of services showing that it believed in a broad program of Christian service. Ministers' widows came in for considerable attention and practically every treasurer's report lists an item or items. Scholarships were popular and practically all of our divinity schools came in for a small share in these gifts. Among the schools listed in the treasurers' statements are: The St. Mary's Professorship at St. Lawrence University, Canton, N.Y.; Lombard College; Mitchell Seminary, Mitchellville, Iowa; Goddard Seminary, Barre, Vt.; Buchtel College; and Westbrook Seminary, Westbrook, Maine. In 1900 a vote was taken to pay the year's salary of the teacher of English at the Universalist school at Camp Hill, Ala. Dozens of churches also came in for grants ranging from a mere \$25 to \$1,000, as in the case of the Denver church. Some of our really prosperous churches are among those listed, but more are among the strictly missionary ventures, lost because there was no systematic follow-up. Areas mentioned in which we now have no contacts are: Nebraska, Missouri, South Dakota, Washington, Arkansas, Texas, and Oregon.

In 1874 the Universalist women of Washington, D.C., joined the Centenary Association with the understanding that

they keep all the money they collected for the purpose of buying a lot for a church. The Association assisted in the project, later giving \$1,000 for the furnishings for the new church, and one member, Miss Harriet Fay of Massachusetts, gave \$3,000 for the organ, a gift made in the name of the Centenary Association. The records are interspersed with references to the zeal of the women for having a church at work in the nation's capital.

Temporary interest and support was given in 1883 to the Rev. James Billings of Connecticut in missionary work which he was attempting in Texas, during a temporary sojourn there for his health. The Association paid Mr. and Mrs. Billings \$100 a year, later increasing it to \$200. The Connecticut branch was the chief individual supporter, Mr. and Mrs. Billings being both well and favorably known there. Mrs. Billings was still on salary in 1900, but the records are not clear as to the areas in which she worked. In 1883 there is a notation that "the Texas mission was extended."

After the Murray Centennial Year, 1870, there was a growing interest in the old shrine of Universalism, the Potter Meeting House, at Good Luck (now Murray Grove), N.J. Records state: "The Association gave \$12,000 toward the purchase of the property and the building of a chapel, the original meeting house having been willed by Thomas Potter to his wife, who was a Methodist, and who chose to keep the property for her own denomination." The first dollar for the purchase of the property was given by the Rev. Phoebe Hanaford in the name of the Centenary Association. The records are not clear as to whether the Centenary Association was able to make good its vote, but payments were still being made to the Potter Fund through the next decade, a reference being made in the minutes of 1880 to an order to the treasurer to "pay D.L. Holden on account of the Potter Memorial Chapel \$50."

The year 1883 records the vote to send Mrs. Deyo to the World Peace Conference in Paris, a notable step for a church group in the 1880s. In 1890 the Centenary Association paid \$75 to become a member of the Women's Council, an interdenominational group with which it had fellowship until 1903. At one of the meetings held in Washington, our president addressed those assembled. In 1893 we find the first mention of dues to the Bureau of Missions, which

presumably was one of the early interdenominational boards of foreign missions.

By 1891 the Centenary Association had raised \$250,000 which it had devoted entirely to mission work and had distributed 5 million tracts, no inconsiderable achievement for a loosely bound together body of women, but they took great pride in their success and went on to new endeavors. In 1899 a pledge of \$1,000 was made to the General Convention's 20th Century Fund, and in 1903 the complete amount was turned over to the convention's treasury.

About 1891, as Mrs. M. Louise Thomas retired from the presidency, a reorganization of the set-up of the national body seemed desirable. It was at this time that many state and local organizations were formed in the manner operative today. It was thought that more successful promotion could be carried on through state groups than by the national organization working directly with local groups and individuals. This was the beginning of the state organizational movement, a policy sound only as the state organizations themselves are sound, but for the most part a satisfactory structure upon which to build a national structure. From this point vigorous promotion to affiliate every available area went on, and several of the state associations in the following years took on redevelopment, patterned more or less after the national organization. Mrs. Cordelia A. Quinby was the first president under the reorganization.

In 1902, the Church Building and Loan Fund was inaugurated, the women having the distinction of initiating the idea. The raising of the fund was the special item of business for the next three years. Originally starting with a \$200 collection, the fund now totals \$7,000 and is at the disposal of responsible parishes for building and repair work, without interest. Previous to 1902, the Centenary Association had made generous outright gifts for church aid. But with the formal establishment of the new fund, the money was put on a strictly loan basis. In spite of the fact that giving aid to struggling churches was one of the primary purposes of the organization, this fund has not been a growing one, nor perhaps has it served as widely as it might have, although a goodly number of parishes have been helped, and still are being helped, by it.

We read in the records of 1903 a vote "to continue the \$1,000 pledge to Japan," showing that the organization had given generous support to the General Convention's project. In 1904 there was an agitation to send a second missionary to Japan who should be the women's financial responsibility. Evidently Miss Margaret C. Schouler had been approached to return to Japan in this capacity, but was unable to do so. Then a woman whose name does not appear in our records was approached and apparently agreed to go but later must have declined for, along in the minutes, we read the rather amusing item: "The committee in charge of our new woman missionary reported that she has thrown up her contract because of contemplated marriage: the disappointment of the board was too deep for expression and it was the earnest prayer of all present that the committee may be able to overcome the difficulty that now confronts it." Evidently nothing could be done about it because it was not until 1905, some 15 years after the Universalist work was started in Tokyo, that the Centenary Association began its direct service through a missionary on its own payroll. In 1905 it sent Miss M. Agnes Hathaway to Tokyo to assist Miss Catherine M. Osborne, who was employed by the General Convention. When making the motion to take on the work we find the notation: "The year's expenses are in hand." Shortly after Miss Hathaway went to Japan, Mr. Lucien Blackmer responded to the call of Miss Osborne for a sum of money to build a home for girls in Tokyo. This gift consisted of \$31,000 and a generous yearly stipend for maintenance. The Lucien Blackmer Home for Girls was the result. At about this time the Centenary Association launched its drive for the Blackmer Home Endowment Fund, to assist in the Universalist convention's Blackmer Home project. The work of the General Convention and that of the Association fitted together into an acceptable pattern, and each carried out its own program until 1913 when the General Convention invited the women to assume the responsibility for the work at the Home and in the kindergartens, the General Convention still maintaining its preaching stations and expanding its program in other areas. The invitation was accepted and, until the recent crisis, there had been little change in the financial pattern.

A communication from the Massachusetts Association Executive Board requesting that the national Association

share with it the services of a missionary to the South made possible such an activity during the winter of 1904-05. The Rev. Ada C. Bowles acted in that capacity, organizing mission circles in Woodington, Magnolia, and Durham, in North Carolina, and in Rutledge, Winder, Monticello and Comer, in Georgia. The Rev. Asa M. Bradley was also sent to the Pacific Coast as a part of the program of promotion and expansion. Noted Universalist missionary Dr. Quillen Hamilton Shinn organized the mission circles at Tarpon Springs, Fla. At this same time the Rev. Henrietta G. Moore was appointed our missionary in Dayton, Ohio (at a compensation of \$200 a year).

Other gifts credited to the closing years of The Women's Centenary Association are: furnishing the dining room of a dormitory at Buchtel College; scholarships at Camp Hill Industrial School in Alabama; gifts to Universalist colleges—Tufts, Lombard, and St. Lawrence—and a door for the church at St. Paul, Minn.

In 1905 the proposal to rename the Association was under discussion, the word centenary seemingly definitely to date the organization without providing an adequate reason for its continuance.

At the turn of the century the Christian church was giving its concerted attention to the extension of its influence both at home and abroad. Mission societies were springing up everywhere. It was only natural that the new name for the organization follow the general pattern. At the biennial held in Minneapolis in 1905, The Women's National Missionary Association of The Universalist Church was adopted as the official name of the reorganized body. The charter was again taken out in Washington, D.C., and a new era of activity began.

1905 - 1917

The original motion toward a change of name for the reorganized body proposed The Women's National Association of The Universalist Church, but an amendment inserted the word Missionary so that the official name became The Women's National Missionary Association of the Universalist Church. Looking back on this era it becomes evident that

this one amendment exerted a profound effect upon the development of the women's program. The insertion of that one word departmentalized the whole program, and from 1905 to 1939 the organization devoted its exclusive interests to the missionary program of the church, attempting to carry on, to expand, and to organize a pattern of procedure in keeping with the growing interests in church outreach.

The same general welfare work was carried on as in the Centenary years: contributions to the missionary projects instigated by the Universalist General Convention and sporadically by the Association itself, contributions to salaries of ministers in needy parishes, scholarships for promising theological students, relief for minister's widows, gifts to denominational schools, including Suffolk Training School, Suffolk, Va., and the Wichita, Kan., Manual Training School, aid to the Young People's Christian Union, to Good Luck Association at Murray Grove, besides gifts to individual churches from Maine to Florida and from the East Coast to the far West.

By 1906 the spirit animating the gift made in 1873 to Buchtel College for the endowment of a professorship for women had been violated and a man had been called to the chair. In protest of this infringement, the Missionary Association petitioned Buchtel's Board of Trustees to respect the spirit of the gift and to keep the Chloe Pierce Chair open to women only. The request was not granted, and the reason given was that the total pledge of \$20,000 had fallen short by \$1,500 and hence appeared not to be binding. Since the Great Depression occurred in the 1870s this excuse seems less valid than it might have been in more affluent years, but although the matter appears to have been further referred to an investigating committee, nothing came of it and the point was never pressed. Perhaps the women felt that they had successfully pioneered and had so achieved the point.

During the first active year of the Missionary Association petitions had come in, notably from the Massachusetts Association, for a regular page in *The Christian Leader* which should carry the reports, policies and notices of the Association. In accordance, arrangements were made with the Universalist Publishing House to make this service a regular procedure, and different persons were made responsible for the copy. But it was not until 1913 that it was

recognized that there should be a more direct point of contact between the office of president and the mission circles. Thus *The Bulletin* came into being in this limited capacity, proved its worth, and was soon extended to all members. The first copy of *The Bulletin*, official organ of the Association, was sent out from the executive office, then at 359 Boylston St., Boston, in November 1913. It was a 5x7, four-page bulletin printed monthly during the church year. From 1913 to the present *The Bulletin*, although considerably changed in format and content, has been contributing to the women's program, first in the small monthly paper and at present in the larger, eight-page edition which is published bimonthly from September to June.

In the Centenary Association days one of the most interesting features of the work was the preparation and presentation of denominational tracts as a part of a program of liberal evangelism. This work went on with renewed zeal through 1906 and 1907, 150,000 pieces being distributed, including a large number of liberal sermons. The 1909 report sounds a new note, reporting 20 new leaflets, each having to do specifically with the women's program, this in contrast to earlier years when no special promotion was given to the program of organization. This period, then, begins the years when a definite awareness of distinctive features of the women's program became evident.

There has always been a strong interest among Universalists in the field of social action well as in social welfare. The Missionary Association endorsed and worked for the League of Nations, national prohibition, prison reform, and systematic prison work for women under arrest. It had representation at the Law Enforcement Conference and the Conference on the Cause and Cure of War. It made liberal contributions to the famine sufferers in India; the sufferers in the Halifax, Nova Scotia, disaster of 1918; to Armenian Relief; to the leper missions in China and Japan; to the Chaplain's Fund; to homes for the aged and orphans; immigrant homes; soldiers' homes; day nurseries; to the McCall Mission in France and the Grenfell Mission; and sent surgical dressings to Vellore College in India. In 1917 two state associations carried a good program of social service to foreigners. In Japan a social service program was set up at Dojin House, Tokyo, under Mrs. Matsu Koyana Yoshioka,

whom the Missionary Association had previously financed for two years of post graduate work at Smith College, Northampton, Mass., with practice work at Lincoln House, Boston, and Unity House, Minn. Aid was extended Mrs. Yoshioka with the understanding that she give five years of service, with pay, to Blackmer Home upon her return. This work consisted of instruction in English, sewing, child welfare and clinic work.

This work in social action and social welfare was promoted under a Department of Philanthropy and the St. Makrina Sisterhood, the two being finally merged. The St. Makrina Sisterhood had for its special function: rescue work for arrested women before trial; for imprisoned and released and fallen women; preventive work for motherless, homeless and working girls away from home; relief work for women needing employment; invalid, elderly and needy women with children; legal work, aiming to secure protective laws for women and children.

It became evident in the early years that the most fervent missionary zeal of the denomination was vested in the Missionary Association and that a sincere attempt was being made by that organization to develop a meaningful program. The Rev. George E. Huntley, then of Canton (St. Lawrence University), N.Y., wrote: "I am deeply impressed with the conviction that there ought to be more mutual helpfulness and understanding between your organization and our theological schools. In accordance with this belief, I have arranged to have the work presented as a part of our regular curriculum at Canton, so that no student will graduate without a knowledge of the history, spirit and hopes of your society." Reacting to this gracious announcement, the Executive Board immediately granted \$100 for books, maps and such other materials as were needed to assist in the program.

Rather than develop a missionary program of its own and attempt to promote it, the Missionary Association adopted the plan of recommending certain study or studies from current books and pamphlets. Before the days of *The Bulletin*, the program was announced at the time of the biennial convention, or through an occasional page in *The Christian Leader*. In 1908, aliens were entering the country in such numbers as to cause alarm, and that topic became the study theme for the year. In 1909 the theme was peace. In

that year Miss Angelica Graves of Maine presented a plan for organizing mission study classes, but it was not until 1913 that a general system of mission study was urged upon all women's groups. A recommendation inaugurating a Mission Study Department and urging the introduction of a systematic study of missions in all of the Universalist theological schools was passed in 1913. By 1909 many of the groups were studying the interdenominational books published annually by the Central Committee on the Unity Study of Foreign Missions. These constituted the foreign mission study work at the Northfield Missionary Conference, an interdenominational group which met in Western Massachusetts. Often these books were purchased by the Missionary Association and loaned to interested groups for study.

Interdenominational cooperation in mission work has not always been easy. Mrs. Marietta B. Wilkins was the first Universalist woman to attend the Northfield Missionary Conference. She went upon invitation of Mrs. Henry W. Peabody, Baptist, then chairman of the conference. Mrs. Wilkins was quartered with the officials of other missionary societies, was invited to become a member of the board, attended one meeting and was then discovered to be a Universalist! She was not notified of the next meeting of the board, but went to the conference the second year, taking other Universalist women with her, persisting even in the face of certain humiliations and rebuffs. Finally, such persons as the nationally known Baptist preacher, Henry Emerson Fosdick; John R. Mott; Earl Taylor; and Mrs. Montgomery, Baptist, then chairman of the conference, endorsed us and the way to cooperation and service was easier. Similar difficulties were met in the establishment of the Universalist missionary study camp at Northfield, but long since have any questions arisen concerning liberal participation, and today, our women might become members of the faculty without comment from the conservatists.

1917 - 1930

The Missionary Association was always zealous in the development of institutes to further its missionary program and was liberal in the support of them. It became a life

member of the Good Luck Association of Murray Grove, an action which resulted in a vote by that body that all incorporated bodies of the denomination be given a vote at the annual meeting, through a representative of the executive board of the organization. For several years such a delegate was studiously appointed and the women established what was called Women's Day, carrying out such program as the delegate planned. Early the need for missionary training was felt, and board members and delegates began to find their way to the Northfield Missionary Conference. At Ferry Beach, Saco, Maine, in 1910 there was a school of methods, interpreting the missionary program to liberal women. As far as is known, this was the first attempt in any of our institutes to introduce a study program. In 1911 the Department of Institutes was set up. At Northfield in 1916 there were 60 Universalist women; at Chambersburg the Missionary Association was represented on the Board of Government; several Universalists attended Chautauqua at Winona, Ind. It was in 1916 that the first Universalist camp was started at Northfield, to provide missionary training for Universalist girls and young women. Camp Murray (Northfield) and Camp Cheery (Ferry Beach) made very distinct contributions to the program. Miss Hazel I. Kirk, Miss Georgene E. Bowen and Miss Ruth G. Downing, who all later served at one or more of our mission points, served either as delegate or leader at these camps.

Out of the camp activity for girls there arose a need for development and organization of junior groups, with a final appeal to set up a junior department. In 1916 there was a motion to form the existing groups under the name of The Clara Barton Guilds. The definite aims were to educate the young women and to give them something to do in the way of Christian service. It was originally planned that they should assume their responsibility for Midori Kindergarten in Tokyo, but as 1916 was a war year the groups concentrated largely upon Red Cross work and the three French war orphans whom they had adopted. In 1925 there were 75 active guilds with 1,000 in attendance. It was not long, however, before the wide range in age limits became a problem for those promoting the program. In 1927 there was a motion to limit the ages to 16-25, but the motion was lost and a year later the same problem intensified with the disposition to "do something about it" more and more

insistent. Apparently no decision was arrived at, because at the end of the era there were members ranging in age from 10 to 50.

Growing out of the need of books to keep Universalists informed upon those matters of doctrine, philosophy and mission, the Missionary Association instituted a traveling library of some 200 doctrinal books, housed at headquarters and subject to loan. There were many invaluable books in the collection and records show that they were widely used. A catalogue was prepared and circulated, from which selections might be made. This work was carried on until the development of the General Sunday School Association library, at which time the Missionary Association placed the more worthwhile of the remaining books there, while the strictly denominational books were placed at two of the Southern mission points.

The Missionary Association was not unmindful of the unfolding program of interdenominational cooperation and in so far as possible embraced the opportunities. In 1919 the records show a contribution to the Foreign Missions Conference. Every year thereafter the dues was a budgeted item, and delegates were appointed to attend the meetings. Membership was also held in the Women's Board of Foreign Missions and in the Conference of Southern Mountain Workers. In 1913 Mrs. Marion D. Shutter represented Universalist women at the International Congress of Religious Liberals in Paris. Support was also given to the World Alliance of the International Friendship Through the Churches.

The Japanese Missions

In 1907 the Missionary Association voted to assume responsibility for a \$20,000 endowment fund for the maintenance of Blackmer Home. To this time all of the work done by Universalists in Japan had been under the program of the Universalist General Convention. The Missionary Association had accepted a specific responsibility for the salary of Miss M. Agnes Hathaway, but her work was under the authority of the church and subject to its official planning. This special fund for the maintenance of Blackmer Home was urged by Miss Catherine M. Osborne in response to a growing concern lest the yearly dues and gifts might not be adequate without well invested permanent funds from which

to draw a portion of the yearly budget. The drive was launched with enthusiasm directly after the 1907 biennial convention. In 1915, the sum of \$20,163 was reported as raised. Massachusetts was the largest giver with \$5,055; New York, with \$2,179; Maine, \$1,900; Connecticut, \$1,766; and Pennsylvania, \$1,309. Individuals made substantial gifts to augment the group gifts.

The interest developed through the raising of this fund prepared the Missionary Association for the acceptance of additional responsibilities in the foreign field. Miss Hathaway proposed an extra contribution of \$150 for a little house to be built on the grounds at the Blackmer Home for use and training of the poor children of the neighborhood. This small project injected the element of possessiveness, which turned the thought in the direction of specific, orderly planning by one body, and at the biennial convention of 1913 it was voted that the Missionary Association assume the entire responsibility for Blackmer Home, with the understanding that the amount of money so released to the Universalist General Convention be used for extension work in other areas in Japan. This move was favorable to the Universalist General Convention because of the financial status of its outreach budget and the growing demands of the developing interests. It was, nevertheless, another step in the process of dividing the mission work of the church into two rather distinct parts—the formal educational program (Blackmer Home and the kindergartens) and the preaching missions and their work.

At this time, however, the Universalist General Convention recognized the wisdom of an attempt at corporate planning for the foreign work and its delegate body passed a resolution that "hereafter the Missionary Association be requested to nominate two members of the Foreign Missions Board and the Young People's Christian Union one, in addition to two from the Universalist General Convention Board," and that "the Board thus constituted be authorized to inaugurate a policy in harmony with the spirit of this general policy of management." The policy was not systematically followed for any length of time, however, and the interests soon became separated into two quite distinct projects or endeavors.

In 1914 Miss M. Louise Klein began a period of training for service at Blackmer Home and sailed the following year. In 1916, Tei San Yasumura, a Blackmer Home girl, came to the attention of Mrs. Theresa Homet Patterson during a visit to the Tokyo home. When Mrs. Patterson learned that this talented girl had received all the musical instruction Tokyo offered at that time, she agreed to pay her tuition for an intensive course at the New England Conservatory of Music in Boston. Upon arrival here, Miss Yasumura was received into the home of Mrs. Wilkins, in Salem, Mass., where she remained during her years of study. She was not a protegee of the Executive Board but was greatly loved and helped by them. Tome Imai was another Japanese girl brought to this country for college instruction. She was a student at Tufts College. During these early years of the century a system of supporting girls by appointing them as the special responsibility of state conventions or of individual groups was sent up and Blackmer Home was filled to capacity. As late as 1928 the board assumed support of two talented Japanese girls. The many beautiful and lasting friendships thus made between the peoples of the two countries bear testimony to the fact that tolerance comes with understanding.

In 1918 the Missionary Association secured the Rev. Hazel I. Kirk to replace Miss Klein at Blackmer Home and two years later, when a minister was needed for the Shidzuoka Church, Miss Kirk was loaned to that parish, the Missionary Association paying the salary. The women had a particular interest in this parish because it had previously subsidized the church to the extent of \$1,000 so that it might be able to carry on its program.

The need for additional kindergarten opportunities was answered by the Ohio State Association of Universalist Women in the form of a \$10,000 gift to be applied to the building of a second kindergarten. This building, erected in 1927 on the new site allotted the church by the Reconstruction Bureau, and near the site of the former Central Church, was called, out of courtesy to the generous donors, the Ohayo Kindergarten.

In 1922 Mrs. Alice G. Rowe went to Blackmer Home and Miss Bernice W. Kent of New York accepted service as a kindergarten teacher. In 1928 Miss Kent had three

kindergartens under her supervision—two in Dojin House and the Ohayo Kindergarten.

Following the 1923 earthquake, which destroyed the equipment and part of the building, the Midori Kindergarten had to be rebuilt. Twelve thousand dollars was appropriated by the Universalist General Convention for this purpose but over \$5,000 of that amount was paid into the Missionary Association's treasury by the women. Midori Kindergarten developed considerable prestige and was used as an observation school for practice teachers. The Young People's Christian Union gave liberal support to Midori, and with the assistance of two wealthy Japanese women carried the complete financial responsibility for one full year.

Miss Georgene E. Bowen, Bellows, Falls, Vt., took special training at Boston University and sailed for Japan in 1925 to serve at Blackmer Home. In 1929 Miss Ruth G. Downing of Connecticut, who had been with the Rev. Hannah J. Powell at Friendly House—an Association mission in North Carolina—was sent as kindergarten supervisor to replace Miss Kent, who was retiring. Miss Hathaway had spent a portion of the previous year as hostess at the Missionary Association's Clara Barton Birthplace Memorial at North Oxford, Mass., but was returned to Tokyo in 1928 to serve part-time in Blackmer Home with Miss Bowen. Her years of devotion to the work made her eager to go back for the remaining years given her to serve the church and its auxiliary. The last missionary to be appointed to a post in the mission was Miss Martha R. Stacy of Massachusetts, who was sent out in 1938 to replace Miss Bowen as house mother at Blackmer Home; Miss Stacy was "borrowed" from the American Board of Foreign Missions under which she had previously served, but she came into Universalist fellowship in the church in Tokyo and served the cause with sincerity and devotion.

At the height of the work, before the Japanese movement to nationalize Christianity, the program included Blackmer Home, a resident home for 24 Japanese girls, students in Tokyo schools and colleges, with activities in English and Bible classes, girls' clubs, kindergarten training work; Dojin House, erected in 1924, a social and religious center, connected with Blackmer Home and covering such activities as Sunday services, Midori Kindergarten with two

sessions, Bible classes, English schools, mothers' clubs, nurses' study clubs, sewing clubs and social service work; the Ohayo Kindergarten and Iidamachi Dojin Sunday School, and Miss Hathaway's house in Zushi, which under the terms of her will was left to the Missionary Association for use of missionaries and Blackmer Home girls.

We pass out of this era of foreign service with a well defined and well running program through which, nevertheless, both at home and abroad there was being injected certain doubts and concerns for the future of missions in the Orient where, in its drive for national unity, the government sought the support of the churches to cooperate in the national policy on a voluntary basis; to eliminate denominationalism; to support themselves without financial aid from abroad.

Work in the South

The Missionary Association had been responsible for certain work in the South since 1902, but previous to 1911 more or less sporadically assisted in the missionary enterprise merely by making gifts with little definite plan in mind. Churches in Georgia, Tennessee, Kentucky, South Carolina, North Carolina, Texas, Oregon, New Hampshire, Maine, Ohio, California, Pennsylvania and Illinois came in for aid. Usually the gift was specified for the ministers' salary, but sometimes, as in the case of Texas, the appropriation was designated for "a tent with sides, lights and a portable organ," or pews for Little Rock, Ark., or pillars for Winchester, N.H., or for the memorial window for the National Memorial Church, Washington, D.C.

At the opening of the Missionary Association era, the Rev. Ada C. Bowles was continuing to "work in the district designated by the Board of Trustees of the Universalist General Convention, under the direction of a Committee of Organization," but was paid by the Missionary Association; the Rev. L.A. Lowrey and the Rev. J.W. Grimmer were in southern Georgia; the Rev. Harriet Moore was working in the Dayton, Ohio, area.

A number of small parishes had sprung up in North Carolina following the usual pattern of organizing into a state association. Many of these parishes had been subsidized by the Universalist General Convention, but in 1911 the North Carolina State Convention, acting with the full approval of

the Board of Trustees of the Universalist General Convention, requested the Missionary Association to assume the superintendency for the state program. This opened up an era of established work which has been both expanded and contracted as more opportunities were presented, or as the various churches have worked themselves toward greater economic independence.

In those early days the Rev. and Mrs. W.O. Bodell were at work in Durham and the Rev T.C. Chapman at Red Hill. In 1915, the Rev. J.M. Rasnake was added to the payroll. Space does not permit more than a passing mention of the devoted men and women who responded to the call to Southern service: the Rev. Jasper L. and the Rev. Eliza C. Everton for whom the Everton Circuit took its name; the Rev. Harry L. and Mrs. Mary Grace Canfield whose entree into the college life of Greensboro won distinction for the liberal philosophy to which the orthodox South does not too readily respond, and passing in rapid succession, a number of other ministers and lay people.

The Rev. Hannah J. Powell went to Pigeon River, N.C., in the foothill region of the Great Smokies, in 1921, and introduced a new note into mission activity. In addition to a preaching station, which had been established there under Father Inman, Miss Powell instituted a social service program, which served the people up through the Pigeon River Valley during those years of bitterness and hardships which followed the removal of the lumbering operations by which the families of the valley had been largely fed and clothed.¹ Miss Powell did a significant piece of work among the young people, instituting for them summer schools and a variety of activities planned for Christian growth. The need for a building to serve the double purpose of minister's home and social center resulted in the purchase in 1924 of a half acre of land adjoining Inman's Chapel, and another one-third acre the following year, and the erection in 1927 of what was known as Friendly House. Friendly House cost the Missionary Association \$6,000 and served its purpose well.

1. "Father Inman" was the Rev. James Anderson Inman, who ministered to the people of the Pigeon River area for forty-five years.

In 1926 it was decided to build a new church at Rocky Mount. A lot had been made available through the devotion of Mrs. Martha O. Winstead, to whom goes credit for a large part of the pioneer zeal for this particular parish. The architect's plans called for a brick building to combine church and parsonage under one roof. The total cost was \$18,732, and the building was completed and dedicated in April 1927.

An appeal for the Southern Building Fund went out in 1924, first to provide for the building of Friendly House and then for the Rocky Mount Church. The fund apparently did not grow rapidly enough to meet the needs and a short term loan, negotiated with the Universalist General Convention, was effected. This appears to be the only instance when the Missionary Association (or the Centenary Association) expended any material amount without the assurance that its treasury was sufficient to warrant the outlay.

In passing, mention should be made of the Missionary Association's contribution to the work in Tennessee, where in the early 1920s the Rev. George A. Gay was serving at Chattanooga, followed in 1924 by the Rev. B.H. Clark. The Rev. William E. Manning Todd was serving at Harriman. Regular support to the Tennessee churches was withdrawn at the end of 1929 but had covered a period of about 10 years.

As the Missionary Association approached the 50-year mark (1919), it seemed fitting to celebrate in some significant way. Accordingly, it was decided to "heartily endorse the recommendation of our President in regard to the raising of a Jubilee Fund of \$100,000, the interest only to be used for Home Missions," and at the 1917 Worcester Convention the Jubilee Fund became the big objective. Mrs. Wilkins was made chairman and devised a unique method of gaining widespread cooperation. "Golden Chain" links were sent into every Universalist church, whether it had a mission circle or not, with the invitation to pledge toward the Jubilee Fund. All donors of \$2 or more became members of the Missionary Association and links in the chain of service. The total pledging amounted to \$99,864 but unfortunately, not all of the pledges were made good. In 1921 the fund had grown to \$90,000 and in 1925 to \$95,063.

The Rev. Hannah J. Powell retired from her work in North Carolina in 1936 and was replaced by the Rev. George C. Boorn of Pennsylvania. In 1937, the Rev. Gustav H. Ulrich went to Outlaw's Bridge, where one of the most

promising of the North Carolina parishes was developing. Largely though the vision and determination of "Aunt Julia Outlaw," a small liberal group built a church and in 1937 a parsonage was built. The people were well-conditioned for the social-minded young minister and his family who responded to their call, and with whom they built up a significant rural program. In 1934, the Rev. W.H. Keels, former secretary of the Universalist General Convention, replaced Dr. Francis B. Bishop in the city of Rocky Mount, and brought stability and prestige to the work there. The Rev. George Lapoint was serving the Kinston circuit. The Missionary Association years closed with four ministers in the field, each serving from two to five parishes.

The only real estate holdings of the Missionary Association in North Carolina were the church property at Rocky Mount; Friendly House, at Canton; land in Greensboro, which was being held for the erection of a new church; and a mountain cabin which had been moved to the Friendly House campus.

The Clara Barton Birthplace

It had been a common practice for religious, patriotic and fraternal societies to purchase and restore historical shrines. When it became known in 1920 that the Clara Barton Birthplace at North Oxford, Mass., was to be sold, Universalist women were determined to possess and reclaim it, that it might become a monument to the life and work of Universalist Clara Barton.

In February 1921, the Executive Board of the Missionary Association authorized the following purchase: "Voted that the President, acting for and in behalf of this organization, be and hereby is authorized to purchase from Carl O. Carlson of Oxford, Massachusetts, for the sum of \$6,100 the property now owned by said Carlson and being the property commonly known as Clara Barton Home Place, said property being located in Oxford, Massachusetts, and containing approximately 96 acres of land and, further, that said President is authorized to do any and all acts necessary to carry into effect this vote."

The board soon voted \$7,000 for the restoration of the property and Harland A. Perkins, a Boston architect, generously gave his services. On October 12, 1921, the house was dedicated and its mission announced: "to maintain this

place as a denominational shrine: to furnish the house according to the period of her (Clara Barton's) birth (1821); to keep it open to visitors; to use it for summer institute work; and to carry on some kind of humanitarian work."

Mrs. and Mrs. George Etz of Akron, Ohio, the first custodians, began their service in December 1921. The memorial was advertised in popular tour guides, and visitors began to find their way up Taft Hill to the little white Cape Cod house nestled among old trees on a New England hillside.

An immediate appeal for \$5,000 was answered slowly, perhaps because the Jubilee Fund still had \$10,000 more to go and the first \$90,000 had been a major concern over a period of years. In consequence of the shortage of funds, a vote was taken in October 1922 to close the Birthplace until more money came in. But the following summer, through the courtesy of the Massachusetts State Convention, the Rev. and Mrs. Charles H. Pennoyer, whose summer pastorate was the Oxford Church, lived at the Birthplace for two months and kept it open to visitors. Two generous women guaranteed the expenses of this reopening. The Clara Barton Birthplace Committee assumed responsibility for the additional fall months so that the property might be open during the biennial convention, which convened that year in Providence, R.I. The record of visitors during that autumn listed over a 1,000 persons from 14 states; New Brunswick, Canada; England; and Australia.

In 1926 a joint committee of the Massachusetts-Rhode Island Young People's Christian Union, the Clara Barton Guild, and the Missionary Association decided to start a Fresh Air camp serving underprivileged children on the premises. During the years which followed, young people played an important part in the camp operation, but the movement was always buttressed by the faith and financial support of the Missionary Association through its Clara Barton Birthplace Committee.

The Fresh Air Camp that opened that summer was a pioneer adventure, and much study and hard work went into it. Fourteen children made up the roster of the first group in the 1926 season. On the grounds was a converted shed known as the bunk house. Built into it were 14 crude bunks with rope foundations and thin mattresses. The kitchen and dining room were in the ell of the house, the old barns being unsafe for use at that time. And this was the equipment with which

was started the first adventure in faith—the Clara Barton Birthplace Camp, as it was sometimes called.

Progressive learning from experience from 1926 to 1932 resulted in improvement and additions to camp equipment and personnel. The splendid loyalty and enthusiastic support of the project prepared the Missionary Association for the rare opportunity for a cooperative service to diabetic girls, which came in 1932.

In the Boston *Saturday Evening Transcript*, published about this time, there appeared an article written by Dr. Elliott P. Joslin of Boston and Oxford, concerning the need for "islands of safety" for diabetic children. The ever-alert eye of the secretary of the Missionary Association found the article, read it with interest, visioned in it a possible source of great service for the Clara Barton Camp as an "island of safety," and with dispatch sent the article to the chairman of the Camp Committee.

The article and the idea were presented to the Executive Board of the Missionary Association at a meeting in Boston, in January, 1932. At the same time the reply from Dr. Joslin to the chairman's offer to him of the camp and equipment was read. With his usual courtesy and kindness, he thanked the Executive Board for its offer, but indicated his inability to take on any more duties than he was carrying. The disappointment was keen, but the women determined to make one more approach, asking this time for a personal interview. On the success of that interview rests the story of the Clara Barton Camp for Diabetic Girls.

Annually from 1932, a summer camp was operated jointly by Dr. Joslin and his associates at the George F. Baker Clinic of the New England Deaconess Hospital in Boston and our women's Association for the care and treatment of girls with diabetes. The work immediately captured the imagination of Universalist women and was loyally supported.

A committee was appointed in 1926 to start an endowment fund for the Clara Barton Birthplace and Mrs. Wilkins was appointed chairman. The following biennial convention recommended to commend the splendid work thus done and to sanction the project for raising by subscription an endowment fund of \$50,000. At the close of the Missionary Association period the total stood at \$21,344.

Flag Day was instituted in 1928 and was carried out annually throughout the remaining Missionary Association years. These special days brought large delegations to North Oxford, and the day's program became one of the highlights of the year. Especially colorful was the 1928 program, when the Boston representative for the consul of Switzerland presented the Swiss flag to the Clara Barton Birthplace Memorial as a token of the esteem for Clara Barton for her service in the Red Cross—not alone to this country but to the world.

There had been considerable controversy over the status of the old barn but those who envisioned the work as expanding recommended remodelling. The work was done in 1930, a large part of the cost being paid for out of private pockets. But even with the additional room this made available there was a pressing need for an adequate administration building. A drive was authorized for March 1938, and a unique plan for financing was adopted. It was "The Measured Mile That Builds," and the slogan became, "Give a mile and three-quarters of dollars to complete the unit for the Clara Barton Camp for Diabetics at North Oxford." The amount asked for was \$9,240 and was oversubscribed to the extent of \$349. The building was dedicated on Flag Day, 1938.

When the Missionary Association days closed in 1939, the property at the Birthplace was valued at \$40,715, and consisted of the homestead, the administration building, the remodelled barn and eight cabins, accommodating 40 girls at one time during the camp season. A well ordered program had been in operation over a period of seven years, and Dr. Joslin and his associates expressed sincere approval over the policy of joint administration.

The Clara Barton Birthplace Memorial became the third major project of the Association in 1935.

Moving Toward Reorganization

Through the 1920s the rapidly expanding program in North Carolina, the institution of the office of field secretary (Miss Susan M. Andrews, 1921), the increased Executive Board expense incident to the administration of funds and programs, sent the total budget for 1927-28 to the all-time high of \$37,856. A Sinking Fund was established in 1923 to

take care of an immediate deficit, but belated returns from states with unpaid Clara Barton Birthplace appointments showed, according to the 1925 report, a balance on hand. The next few years, however, presented further financial difficulties and in October 1937, action was taken to write off the \$20,765 debt. With this adjustment in the books, and a considerable pruning by the finance committee, the Missionary Association years closed with a note of optimism and the hope for a controlled program in the years ahead.

One of the significant events of 1935 was the institution of Dedication Day for all Universalist Women. The program was prepared and presented to the Missionary Association by a group representing the Connecticut State Women's Association. This Dedication Day, the first dramatic event in the plan to bring all women of the church into a common fellowship, really launched the reorganization program, the wisdom for which had been recognized over and over again in the policies and plans of the Association. A pamphlet issued under the title, "Suggestions for Uniting Women's Societies Under One Organizational Plan," showed the trend of the earlier thinking regarding reorganization and gave a clear conception of the goals to be achieved. Yearly, the Dedication Day service drew an increasing number of women together into a vital spiritual fellowship. After the first year, responsibility for the preparation of the service was delegated by the Executive Board of the Association: 1936, Massachusetts; 1937, New York; 1938, Maine; 1939, Minnesota.

It is interesting in these early days to note also how many times references creep into the records disparaging the means by which so much of the money was raised. Missionary boxes were introduced as far back as 1906 "to do away with entertainments." Evidently the problem of giving generously and graciously to the work of the church concerned church-minded women even in the days when giving was their major program.

And so the Missionary Association of the Universalist Church came to a close. Increasing demands for a more inclusive program began to shape the plans for a new era. The enormity of the recognized task of the church building a broader program of Christian churchmanship began to set the pattern for a broader program in women's work, which should include all women in one Universalist fellowship. The

years had been fruitful ones, but the faithful dreamed of a greater and wider service yet to be.

1939 - 1955

The question of a reorganization and a union of women's groups into an Association of Universalist Women had been agitated for several years and had been highlighted during several of the presidencies, as earnest Executive Boards had weighed the actual strength of the existing national organization against the potential strength of a possible national organization.

Not until the 1939 Biennial Convention in Washington, however, were the first actual steps taken to launch into a new and untried area, changing from a strict missionary society to an association with a program of sufficient breadth to cover all the specific interests of women in Christian education and fellowship. At this convention, the name was officially changed to The Association of Universalist Women. The Association was reincorporated under the laws of the District of Columbia; the accumulated funds were put at the disposal of the newly reorganized body; the officers were committed to the tasks of modifying and enlarging the program in conformity with certain definite recommendations noted at that meeting; new goals were set up for program extension and an invitation was sent out to every local group to consider the proposition of local reorganization and unification.

The reorganization took on added interest because of the enthusiasm which the denomination had caught from the approaching John Murray Bicentennial (1941). The Association, significantly, adopted the *Hand-in-Hand*—the name of the brig on which John Murray came to this country—as a symbol for its new program. A card, bearing the brig's picture, together with the Association's five goals, was sent to every local group with the understanding that when the various groups in a church had come together with a unified program worthy of church women, covering not only local church needs but with due consideration for church extension, the card was to be returned to the Executive Office

in Boston as an indication of that church's intention to support the new national program.²

It should be noted here that what was taking place in the women's division of the Universalist Church was taking place also in several other denominations, hastened, probably, by the United Christian Adult Movement which was sweeping the country. This movement, with no organization or budget, arose from an urge within all denominations to bring women out of the church kitchen and center their interest in a program of spiritual growth. That some denominations achieved this more slowly than others was due to the form of church government. In denominations operating under congregational policy, the decision was entirely in the hands of the local group. In others, where the policy is determined by the church and imposed upon the local groups, results were accomplished quickly in name, but the decision when made by the group, instead of for it, proved the more effective, and in the end, quicker. These years have proved the wisdom of patience with education, and the women's program was one of the strongest and most mature in its outreach of any of its contemporaries.

The newly organized Association promised not to enlarge the "missionary" scope until the new program was well established. Strange as it may seem in a church which bases its entire philosophy upon the brotherhood of man, many of the local groups had resented the missionary emphasis of the earlier organization, probably because the very expression carried the connotation of something superimposed. Universalists have never been strong on the orthodox

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The Five Goals

1. Every Universalist woman—a thinking, active member of her church.
2. Every Universalist woman contributing some service to her church.
3. A planned program of women's activities in every church.
4. A planned budget, and methods of raising same.
5. A unified organization for all Universalist women in each church, expressing faith in service and in prayer.

emphasis in "missions," and many Universalist women were slow in discovering that the missionary spirit in man, and the brotherly spirit in man are practically synonymous. Then, too, many groups were slow to interpret churchmanship on broader terms than those which applied to local situations. The promise made in 1939 was to allay the concern of some that this would still be strictly a missionary venture. Perhaps the concern was heightened because of the immediate events in the foreign field, where the former Women's National Missionary Association had a considerable interest and commitment.

The Japanese Missions

At the beginning of the third era in the history of the work of Universalist women, there were two women missionaries in Japan. They had been previously employed by The Women's National Missionary Association, the work of which now came under the Association. As the black clouds gathered ominously, and the religious question loomed large in Japanese thinking, it seemed to the Japanese Universalists that the project and property could be better safeguarded if administered by native sympathizers, so this group, exercising its congregational rights, appealed to The Association of Universalist Women to permit them to do what seemed wisest at the moment. Since the ultimate objective in any mission project is that it may become self-administrative, the Executive Board accepted and passed upon certain articles of organization submitted by the Japanese committee, together with the two missionary employees, creating a Universalist Service Association, taking, in essence at least, the authority out of American hands and vesting it in Japanese hands. In accordance with the prevailing demand on the part of the Japanese government to replace foreign executives with native executives, Miss Martha R. Stacy, house mother at Blackmer Home, and Miss Ruth G. Downing, head of the kindergartens, kept to their appointed tasks while Japanese women were officially appointed to their respective positions. This change came about with the whole-hearted support and cooperation on the part of those in Japan and those in this country, and it is very likely that because of this, when the war was over and the clouds lifted so that one could see what was behind them, it was found that the Japanese had not waited for direction or substance, but had gone bravely

on with the work. This was a great tribute to the administrative policy of the Association.

As conditions grew worse in Japan (1941) and war seemed only a matter of time, the president, Mrs. Ezra B. Wood, cabled the Misses Downing and Stacy to return to this country. A return cable was received the day following the Tufts Convention (September 1941). Miss Downing chose to stay in Japan, believing that by so doing she could best serve the Japanese children whom she had come to love. Miss Stacy, who saw with greater clarity what would inevitably happen to Americans cut off from aid from home and unable to continue their work, complied, and arrived on the West Coast in November. As was to be expected, Miss Downing was interned in March 1942, and during the war years eventually found her way into the Catholic Church.

During the war years only a trickle of information came through. No one knew the status of the property or what had happened to the Japanese workers. Word did come through that Blackmer Home, an American type house which had been built originally to educate Japanese girls, had been destroyed. It was later learned that it was made a fire-break when that part of Tokyo was bombed during the early years of the war.

Following the war, the Church Extension Committee of The Universalist Church of America, aided by funds from the Association, authorized a survey of property and conditions in Japan, and in 1950 the Rev. Carleton M. Fisher went for an extended visit. He found Ohayo kindergarten the only surviving building of a once prosperous venture. The building was much in need of repairs, but was overflowing with the children Mrs. Mitsu Ike had gathered around her. Mr. Fisher found encouragement in the work of the Rev. John Shidara, the only remaining active Universalist minister, who had gone into the rural Nagano area where he had established five churches, five church schools and, with the help of Mrs. Shidara, a center for care of pre-school children. John Shidara was ministering to his people seven days a week in the kind of service they needed to rehabilitate their homes and their farms, as well as their spirits. The survey of the American Universalists resulted in a renewal of activities and in several administrative changes. Due to the difficulty in foreign exchange, together with the restrictions imposed by the Japanese, it seemed wiser to operate the church's program

and the women's program in the foreign field as a unit. Meanwhile, in the church, there had been a gradual growth toward the idea of operating together, rather than as separate entities as had been the history of The Women's National Missionary Association.

The Association had acquired considerable trust funds for work in Japan, one of which was definitely ear-marked for the support of girls in Blackmer Home. As the years passed, Japanese girls were educated in Japanese-financed schools, and there was a women's college not far from Blackmer Home. Following the destruction of Blackmer Home there was no need for such a fund, and a process of litigation was instituted which resulted in the freeing of the fund in 1949. It was then set up as a fund for work with girls, preferably Japanese girls.

Today the Executive Board of the Association and the Department of Service Projects of The Universalist Church of America works together to meet the budget requirements for this field of work. The Association's annual contribution is used for staff salaries. The Koishikawa Universalist Center, erected on the former Blackmer Home property, land owned by The Universalist Church of America, was made possible by a generous grant from the Association. This houses a worship center, church school, Midori kindergarten, and classes for young people. Dojin kindergarten, replacing the former Ohayo kindergarten, was enlarged and improved. The women assumed the responsibility for Mrs. Shidara's pre-school care program, made many gifts toward supplies and equipment, and assisted in the building expansion.

Through its interest in educational opportunities for Japanese young people, the Association provided two Japanese scholarships for American study as a testimony to their belief that world understanding comes through persons. At the 1949 Assembly, a scholarship was voted for Aiko Onishi, daughter of the same Tei Yasamura (Onishi) who graduated from the New England Conservatory of Music in 1920, sponsored by Mrs. Theresa Patterson and Mrs. Marietta Wilkins. Miss Onishi, a talented pianist, came to America in 1950 and studied at the Eastman School of Music in Rochester, N.Y. Upon her graduation, with honors, a unanimous vote of the school judges permitted her to take the examination entitling her to study for her artist's certificate. She then ceased to be under the sponsorship of the

Association. Her record was a proud one. Miss Onishi appeared before several Universalist groups, including the Portland and Andover Assemblies in 1951 and 1953, and she was acclaimed everywhere. She justified the concern of some for the spending of accumulated trust interest on a single individual, for it is no small achievement to have made an artist, in any field, possible.

In addition, the Association provided a scholarship through the church's Department of Service Projects for Satoshi Arai to come to St. Lawrence University to study for the Universalist ministry. Mr. Arai was honored in a recognition service at Charles Street Meeting House in Boston following the completion of his work in June 1954. He returned to Japan that fall to take up his duties as minister to the Universalist church in Tokyo.

The Chinese Projects

During the years when the Japanese program was languishing, the Association carried on a seven-year program of support to Chinese projects. In view of the difficulties involved when small denominational groups attempt foreign service, the Association decided to do what it could through some dependable, recognized agency. To meet the needs of reconstruction which followed the disorders of the 1930s, Ginling College had set up a Rural Service Station in Jenshow, which was moved in 1943 to Chung Ho Chang. This project needed financial aid and was about to be suspended when, at the Association's 1943 biennial meeting in New York City, it was voted to assume the responsibility for it. Later the station was moved to Shwen Hwa Cheng, 12 miles from Nanking. This service project was administered by Ginling College; its students, under the leadership of a graduate student, made up the personnel. These stations carried on a program of education and welfare work designed to restore health and spirit to the people and develop new interests in the communities. Beginning with a milk feeding station and nursing school, the work grew to cover classes for all ages, including instruction to adults in reading, writing and crop improvement. The Association paid the entire salary of the graduate student.

During the 1949-51 biennium, conditions made it impossible to transmit funds to China and the work was officially terminated in January 1951. Miss Hsiuna Ya-Na, a

member of the staff in the Rural Service Work in China, came to America to study for her master's degree at Cornell University, Ithaca, N.Y., and was the guest of the Association during the St. Lawrence Assembly in 1949. She spoke generously of the aid which the Association had provided for the program of reconstruction in the area where she lived and worked, and what the program meant in terms of good will.

The Southern Projects

On the home front, the new era brought a nurse to Friendly House, fulfilling the dream of the Rev. George C. Boorn to provide medical help for mountain families, cut off as they were then from direct contact with doctors and hospitals. Miss Rowena Melhuish, a member of the Binghamton, N.Y., Universalist church became, in 1941, the first nurse and she carried the enthusiasm of a first position to Friendly House. She was followed at Friendly House by an interim nurse, Mrs. Florida Perkins, well acquainted with the mountains. In 1942, Mrs. Perkins was succeeded by Miss Ora Cox Gaskins, recently from the Iola Sanitarium in Rochester, N.Y. Miss Gaskins brought skill and understanding to the medical work at the mission, but for personal reasons she resigned in May, 1943. The war call for nurses made it impossible to fill the vacancy and changing conditions in the area made the work less necessary. A new highway was built into the area, linking the Pigeon River Valley with the nearby city of Waynesville. This advance, coupled with the county nursing service, made a private nurse at Friendly House something of a luxury. The project had been particularly popular with Universalist women, and the equipping of a cabin as a medical center and home for the nurse was done with enthusiasm because Universalist women believed that healthy minds must have healthy bodies, and that all must share in this responsibility.

Mr. Boorn resigned as pastor at Inman's Chapel and director of Friendly House in 1943. The Rev. Lyman I. Achenback was elected to succeed him, but remained less than a year. For a time the work was carried on by Mrs. Donald Plott, a lay worker well known in the mountains. For a period, the Rev. Hannah J. Powell was recruited from Sunset Home, Waterville, Maine, to which she had retired from Friendly House in 1936. In 1946 Mrs. Rosalie West, wife of a medical missionary in India who had become

interested in Universalism and who, upon entrance to this country, had taken her membership in the Oak Park Universalist church, was employed to serve at Friendly House. She was granted a lay license to preach at Inman's Chapel and commissioned to survey the work and interests there. Mrs. West was called from this service, in 1949, to be the Executive Director of the Association. The last regular minister in the parish while the Association was assuming the responsibility was the Rev. Ordell E. Bryant, who had for many years been the beloved pastor in the Clinton Circuit, but who, following his resignation in 1943, had gone to Brevard to live and was then within commuting distance to Inman's Chapel. Mr. Bryant served this parish until his death in 1948.

In 1943, the Rev. Maurice W. Cobb succeeded the Rev. Ordell Bryant at Clinton and Red Hill. Mr. Cobb was one of the younger men in our fellowship, but one with a strong social vision and an earnestness in developing the youth program in which he was especially successful. He was succeeded in 1949 by Mr. Ora W. Eads, under whose leadership the parsonage and new church at Red Hill were built. Mr. Eads was ordained in that parish in 1950.

At Outlaw's Bridge the Rev. Gustav Ulrich served from 1937 to 1947, when he terminated a service of unusual distinction. Like all the ministers in North Carolina, Mr. Ulrich served many parishes, dividing his time among them. He was succeeded by the Rev. Leonard Prater who was serving the parish at the time the church building was destroyed by fire in 1950. Typical of the strength of this parish, the fire had not completely burned itself out before plans were made to rebuild. Mr. Prater was still minister at Outlaw's Bridge when the women's responsibility for these parishes ceased.

The parish at Rocky Mount, so admirably served by the Rev. William H. Skeels, continued to grow and develop. Ill health made it necessary for Mr. Skeels to resign in 1945. Mrs. Skeels had built up a large and flourishing day care school for children of working parents during the war years, and following Mr. Skeels' retirement, they located in Rocky Mount and built an attractive school building and home. There Mr. Skeels died in 1951. Following Mr. Skeels, two other ministers served the church under the program of the

Association: the Rev. Robert Davis, 1945-47 and the Rev. Edwin C. Cunningham, 1949-50.

At the 1943 biennial convention held in New York, The Universalist Church of America passed a resolution to support a minister in the Kinston parish, but did not follow through on it until 1946 when the Rev. Thomas Turrill was settled there. This appointment on the part of the church greatly relieved the load which the eight parishes had placed upon three ministers.

These years of change seemed to demand a re-evaluation of the work in North Carolina, beginning with Friendly House. The new highway had opened up the Pigeon River Valley so that the men could easily commute to the city where jobs were available. Economic changes made the old policies more or less unnecessary. In the minutes of the biennial meeting held at St. Lawrence University in 1947, we find the following:

"We recognize from data that has been presented and filed in our records, that achievement and growth do not warrant a continuation of the present policy at Friendly House, Canton, N.C. We recognize, also, that our past policies may have contributed to the lack of responsibility on the part of the community for this program. We recommend, therefore, that formal work at Friendly House be temporarily suspended, the house to be rented or placed in charge of a custodian whose only duty should be to act as a good citizen and neighbor. In the event that the parish present, within one year, to the Executive Board of The Association of Universalist Women sufficient proof of its serious intent to function as a working parish: we recommend that the Executive Board be instructed to act in accordance with its best judgement to re-establish a preaching service at Inman's Chapel, or such other service as shall be jointly decided upon by the parish, the Executive Board of The Association of Universalist Women, and the Executive Board of the North Carolina State Convention. Failing to present such evidence, the work shall be declared terminated as of September 30, 1948, and the Executive Board be empowered to hold, to sell or otherwise dispose of The

Association of Universalist Women's western North Carolina property."

Subsequently, the officers of the North Carolina State Convention formally asked that Friendly House be deeded to it, so that all of the property would be in one parcel, and in April, 1948, it was so deeded and the Association's participation was legally ended after 20 years of continuous service.

In the fall of 1948, at the suggestion of Dr. Robert Cummins, General Superintendent of the Universalist General Convention, the supervision of the work in the North Carolina churches by the Association was terminated. The work was re-directed through the church's program of Aid to Churches. The Association voted to channel all contributions to the salaries of the North Carolina ministers through the Unified Appeal and agreed to continue for a period of three years to underwrite a portion of the salaries, on a descending scale. At the end of the three years, the long period of underwriting the North Carolina program was terminated. For 40 years (1911-1951), the Association had made possible churches, church schools, youth work, and institutes in this area.

In 1895, Universalists had established a school for the Negroes of Suffolk, Va. Known as Suffolk School, it offered a grammar school education to Negro children until public education was provided for them. In 1939 the name was changed to Jordan Neighborhood House, a more appropriate one for the nursery school, kindergarten and community activities which were initiated.

In 1951, when the support of the North Carolina Churches terminated, the Association voted to cooperate with the denomination in the Jordan House program and made an annual contribution of \$3,000 for the salaries of personnel.

Clara Barton Camp

From about 1945 the Clara Barton Camp for Diabetic Girls began to show phenomenal growth and development. Previously, most parents paid little or nothing of the costs, but in 1949 about two-fifths of the actual camp costs per child were paid by the parents. Legacies and gifts made possible more adequate housing and equipment, and always Dr. Elliott P. Joslin stood by, increasing the medical facilities

and buttressing the immediate needs with gifts from the Diabetes Fund he created.

An outstanding event in the development of the work for diabetic children came in 1947 when Dr. Joslin, through the Diabetes Fund, proposed to provide a similar camp for diabetic boys. It was an overwhelming compliment to Universalist women, to their leaders, and to the committee which administered the Association's part of the work, that Dr. Joslin and his workers had found such agreeable and competent cooperation in this enterprise that he should desire such an expansion. While the new proposition seemed a considerable enlargement of a task previously carried, it could not be treated lightly and, at the 1947 General Assembly at St. Lawrence the following recommendation was passed:

"Be it recommended that The Association of Universalist Women accept the offer of the Diabetes Fund, made by Dr. Elliott P. Joslin, to purchase land, erect the necessary buildings and provide water and sewage disposal systems for a camp for diabetic boys, and leave this camp to The Association of Universalist Women to be administered by them under the same arrangement as the Clara Barton Birthplace Camp for Diabetic Girls. As quickly as it is able to do so The Association of Universalist Women will assume increasing financial responsibility for obtaining part of the equipment and for the administration of the Camp. It is further recommended that the new Camp be known as The Elliott P. Joslin Camp for Diabetic Boys."

At the same meeting, the Association voted to raise \$7,500 for the purchase of equipment for The Elliott P. Joslin Camp, and \$6,000 to cover the running expenses for the season of 1948. The increased responsibility called for a competent camp secretary and Mrs. Daniel Lee Taylor was secured for the position.

The property provided by Dr. Joslin was in Charlton, Mass., within a few miles of the Clara Barton Birthplace Camp. It was an old mill property with woods, fields and a pond for swimming. In 1949, Dr. Joslin purchased an additional 50 acres of shore property which protected

practically all of the pond and gave a hilly field for the children to enjoy.

It is often said there is no success like success, and it often seemed to Universalist women looking on that here was something which contained any number of surprises and that their contributions showed munificent returns. This was due to the fact that this was the kind of "missionary" work in which most people inherently believe. There was no enforced denominational emphasis. No child was barred either by religion or by race. The only criterion for admission was the child's need, which was determined by Dr. Joslin, Dr. Priscilla White, and Dr. Alexander Marble. Because of this, the camps were the recipients of many gifts both from within and outside of our fellowship, through which the Association was able to improve property, add buildings and thereby increase the number of annual campers.

Other Programs

But the service program became only one department of the total program of the Association. A word must be said for the educational program which assumed a position of importance far beyond the study of the Missionary Education Movement books which had been, very largely, the program of the Missionary Association. One of the immediate goals established in 1939 was that church programs should be "church centered," meaning that there is too much to be done in the world for church programs to be small editions of social clubs: they must promote the spirit and philosophy of the church in all areas of living.

The program was based on four points: worship, education, fellowship and service, and each local association was urged and helped to balance its program to these ends.

In 1939, the Association employed the services of Miss Ida Metz. She became the Promotional Secretary, the Association's first executive officer. In 1940, Miss Ida M. Folsom, a former teacher in one of the Maine State Normal Schools and a life-long Universalist, was employed. Miss Folsom did much of the pioneering work in launching the Association's program, making possible a basis for the development of the present program. She retired in 1947 to become assistant in the office of the General Superintendent of the Universalist Church. Miss Folsom was succeeded by Mrs. Rosalie West, who had served as director and lay

minister at Friendly House. During her term of service, Mrs. West was ordained to the ministry of the Universalist Church and in 1951 resigned to accept the pastorate of The Church of the Redeemer, Universalist, in Halifax, New Brunswick. Mrs. West was followed by Mrs. Ann (J. Russell) Bowman. Each of these four brought a specialized interest to the work, which broadened the field of activity and was instrumental in the growth of the program.

In 1941 a new constitution was adopted. This created departments of work and provided a chairman for each who was an elected member of the Executive Board. These chairmen stressed and publicized their particular field and interests, sending literature and suggestions, and providing speakers or field visits to local groups. Also that year, under the direction of the Executive Director, a yearbook was published and distributed to all women's groups. It was the initial attempt to provide a uniform pattern in women's programs. The *Yearbook* replaced the quarterly packets which were previously distributed and were voluminous and often over-balanced in their emphases. The 1941 *Yearbook* was one of the first of its kind to be developed by any national church women's organization, making the Association a pioneer in this field, also.

Under the new constitution, a Department of Social Action replaced the former Social Welfare Committee, and Universalist women turned their attention to this field. Some of their best educational work was in this area. Also, under the Department of Education, the Dedication Day services were continued, providing an annual service of fellowship and worship which did much in developing a deeper spiritual loyalty to the church and its work.

The Association of Universalist Women sustained membership in all the interdenominational groups with which the Women's National Missionary Association had been affiliated and, in addition, became actively affiliated with the Missionary Education Movement, its Executive Director, by virtue of her position, becoming one of the Board of Managers, entitled to express critical judgment on the proposed study books. This was important, even though the liberal voice was weak on the Board of Managers, and often the final books presented a conservative approach to missions which was not the thinking of most Universalists.

Nevertheless the voice could be registered. Through the early years, also, of the United Council of Church Women, the president of the Association was a member of its Executive Board and a delegate to its Biennial Assembly, and the Executive Director was a member of its Program Committee. When the United Council of Church Women became a distinct part of the re-constituted National Council of the Churches of Christ in America, a body which had denied the Universalist Church membership on the basis of belief, the Association continued cooperation after it had lost its representation, remaining loyal wherever its cooperation was acceptable on the local level. In 1953 The Association of Universalist Women took membership in the International Union of Liberal Churches, a worldwide fellowship of liberal church women. This recalls the earlier membership of the Missionary Association in the Women's Council, an interdenominational group of church women (1890-1903). Universalist women have always been world-minded.

During these years there was been a growing awareness on the part of the Association to coordinate its program more completely with that of the church, which also had a Department of Service, a Department of Education, and a Department of Publications in which the work paralleled. One of the first moves toward coordination came when the Association asked for representation on the Board of Trustees, and its president was made, by virtue of her office, a Vice-President. The vice-presidencies, a courtesy also extended to the presidents of the General Sunday School Association and the Universalist Youth, were non-voting officers, so the next move was to make possible at the General Assembly the election of women to the Board of Trustees that their interests might be generalized. Such membership has always been possible, but it had quite consistently followed that the slate as presented at most assemblies had been almost completely male.

With the developing departments in both the Association and The Universalist Church of America, the chairmen of the women's divisions were given membership on the corresponding church boards. This was largely responsible for the solidifying of Universalist work: the churches in North Carolina were made the responsibility of the church, although the Association contributed indirectly to them through the Unified Appeal; the work in Japan was

furthered by the Department of Service Projects, with the Association making its regular commitments, through the Unified Appeal, and often proposing and sponsoring particular phases of the work; the educational program, before the organization of the present Universalist Church of America Department of Education, was brought closer together through the publication of the Cumulative Plan Book, and the Institute Program, (as it affects the women's work), became joint planning, and was financed under the budget of the Department of Education, toward which the Association made its contribution through the Unified Appeal.

This united church effort of promoting the total church program considerably strengthened both the Association and The Universalist Church of America, and presented a better picture of the total accomplishment than was previously possible under the separate entities of earlier years.

In promoting the early program of unification of the many interests which had been developed over the years in local groups, the Executive Director felt the need of closer cooperation between state presidents and the officers of the Association. She pressed consistently for a joint meeting of state and national officers and, in 1947, the State Presidents' Council was established. This council, meeting at yearly intervals with the national officers, was effective in two ways: it brought the work of the state organizations to bear on the overall program, and it made possible a more accurate interpretation of that program to the local churches affiliated with the various state conventions. This was a long step toward that better understanding through shared planning and had much to do in facilitating the work proposed.

In the early 1950s the increase in the number of boys and girls seeking the kind of care obtainable at the Clara Barton Birthplace and Elliott P. Joslin Camps, and the corresponding expansion of program and facilities, brought to the Association an awareness of the need for an overall administration of both camps. To operate the camps jointly under a single management seemed the way best to serve the interests of efficiency and long range economy.

With Mrs. Taylor's retirement in 1955, the transition to this kind of administration was indicated. Accordingly, upon the recommendation of the Clara Barton Birthplace and

Camps Committee that such an administrator be secured and a program of joint operation be put into effect, the Association sought the services of Mr. Robert B. Vail as Administrative Director of the Elliott P. Joslin and Clara Barton Birthplace Camps for Diabetic Children. With Mr. Vail's assumption of office that year, a re-organization of the camping program was instituted and a new era in the history of the camps began.

The Association Today

Prior to 1953, when the Universalist and Unitarian church bodies entered into a plan for federal union in three of its major departments—education, publication, and public relations—the Association appointed a large, representative committee to study, with a similar committee from the Unitarian Alliance, possible future means of cooperation between the two groups. How this will work out, and in what ways closer fraternal relationship may be legalized, remains to the future.

The Association of Universalist Women stands today as an alert and progressive group of church-minded liberal women, recognizing their responsibility in an expanding and changing world, disposed to fit their program and their policies to the needs as they see them.

It is a strong testimony to the business acumen of Universalist women that for a number of years they have balanced their books with no deficits, and that their combined trust funds early in 1955 totaled approximately \$350,000.

Footnote

In May 1963, The Association of Universalist Women and The Alliance of Unitarian Women consolidated to become the Unitarian Universalist Women's Federation, now celebrating its 30th anniversary year.