

[Skaneateles (Mottville), Onondaga Co.]

### Mottville Firemen Open New Quarters for Party

The Mottville firemen will hold a card party in their newly remodeled building, which was once the Universalist Church of Mottville.

The committee headed by Lyell Miller with Wilfred Kew, Herbert Wickham and James Quinn as aides have arranged a card party to be held in the meeting rooms this Thursday evening at 8:00. Pedro and 500 will be played. The proceeds of the affair will be used toward the building fund.

Last summer the fire commissioners of the district of Mottville sold bonds to the amount of \$1,500.00, with part of which they purchased from William Miller the old church building and have remodeled it and constructed an addition on the west side where they house the fire truck. About \$1,000 has been spent in the work thus far and it is the idea of the firemen to raise enough to finish the project. In the remodeling the tower has been removed and electric lights installed and a heating boiler and part of the heating system. The hall, the part formerly used for church services, will not only be used as a firemen's meeting hall, but is to be used for community gatherings as well.

This edifice was built in 1831, according to Clay's History, on land donated by Ansel Frost. The thoroughfare [sic] was called Frost street in honor of the donor of the land; [in] late years it has been known as the Lane. The building was erected at a cost of about \$1,900, this amount being contributed by Col. Robert Earll, Col. Stephen Clark, and Mr. Frost and many others. Although the church was erected for a [Universalist] meeting house, services were conducted for a time by preachers of various denominations. The Universalist congregation held services in the school house previous to purchasing the church.

The congregation for the most part was composed of non-resident people; many of the older residents of Skaneateles would attend the Sunday afternoon services in years gone by.

The church was dedicated by Rev. Dolphus Skinner of Utica, and the first pastor was Rev. Jacob Chase. The services, for a number of years before the doors were closed for religious services a few years ago, were conducted semi-monthly and at less frequent times in later years. The expenses of the society were largely met from endowment funds left by several persons prominent in the community.

Interest in the church society declined when many of the older of the faithful moved from the community or died, the younger members taking up church duties in other churches of the community and near by.

After the congregation ceased to have a resident pastor who occupied the parsonage, now [the] residence of Edward Anderson, they would engage a preacher from Auburn or Syracuse, and sometimes a student at St. Lawrence University at Canton, N.Y. would occupy the pulpit. Some of the preachers who held pastorate[s] there were Rev. Stephen Miles, Rev. Isaac Whitnall, Rev. J. M. Austin of Auburn, Rev. Skinner who [had] dedicated the church, and Rev. G. W. Montgomery. Rev. J. G. Bartholomew, D.D., whose son conducted services there in 1890 also served the church. Rev. L. I. Briggs of Auburn was also a pastor there in the late '70s.

The late Frederick W. Betts of Syracuse took considerable interest in the hamlet church and would preach there in the afternoon after holding services in his own church.

*Skaneateles Press*, Skaneateles NY, Thu. 7 Feb 1935