

The Rev. Dr. Charles H. Fluhrer

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Orleans County historian

The Rev. Dr. Charles H. Fluhrer was called in the winter of 1894 to become the first pastor of the Pullman Memorial Universalist Church in Albion.

The church edifice erected by George M. Pullman at his expense was dedicated Jan. 31, 1895. Likewise, Fluhrer was installed as minister in a separate ceremony the same day.

Fluhrer was born Aug. 29, 1840, in Providence, R.I., to John Christopher and Julia Ann Griener Fluhrer. Both parents were of German extraction.

His early education was received from the schools in Providence. In 1859, he became deeply interested in religion through his pastor, I.D. Cook, of the second Universalist church of that city.

Likewise, he enrolled in the theological department of St. Lawrence University, from which he graduated. He then served briefly as a supply minister in Albany, with his first settlement in Newark, N.Y., from 1865-67.

From there, he served the Universalist Church of Victor, where he married Julia Bishop. While in Victor, he worked to establish a Universalist Church at Macedon. In 1870, he accepted a call to do missionary work in New York and became the first pastor of the Harlem Universalist Church. Here he stayed five years.

In 1875, he accepted a call to Grand Rapids, Mich., where he labored for 19 years.

In 1894, he was called to Albion, where he served until heart problems occurred that caused him to resign in December 1900. The following year, he died Dec. 27, 1901.

Fluhrer received his Doctor of Divinity degree from Lombard College and was a 33rd degree Mason.



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Throughout his life, he maintained a close friendship with the Rev. James M. Pullman, brother of George Pullman. Both Charles Fluhrer and James Pullman attended St. Lawrence University in the same class. It was only natural that Fluhrer was the one selected to become the first pastor at the Pullman Memorial Church in Albion.

Upon his death, Fluhrer left his wife, Julia, and two sons, Howard Fluhrer of Auburn and Gerald B. Fluhrer, a local attorney who became Orleans County judge in 1919. All of these people are buried at Mount Albion Cemetery.

At Rev. Fluhrer's funeral, he was remembered for his dignity, noble character and devotion to the interests of his church. He had won wide respect for his cultured mind and was known as a polished speaker.

A local paper noted, "Dr. Fluhrer was liberal in thought and feeling and in his earnest efforts and purposes to do good, he embraced all mankind."

Our picture of Fluhrer shows him in his study, circa 1895. Note the spittoon and the quantity of books in his

home library.

Note: There will be a tour of Hillside Cemetery, Holley, at 7 p.m. today.