

## CHURCH TO OBSERVE 100TH ANNIVERSARY

Lansing Minister, Head of  
Congregational Conference,  
To Speak on Program

Special to The State Journal:

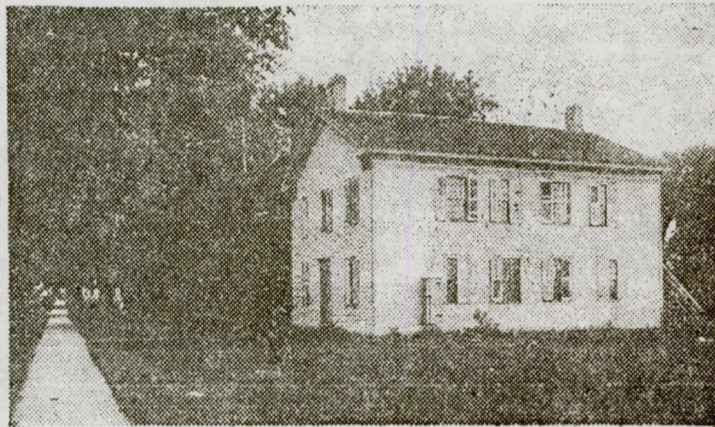
VERMONTVILLE, Feb. 19, 1935 Com-  
memoration of the 100th anniversary  
of the Congregational church here  
will be observed next Sunday. The  
program will include a homecoming,  
memorial and historical services. Dr.  
Stephen Lloyd, Lansing, head of the  
Congregational conference, will be a  
guest speaker for the day, plans for  
which are under the direction of the  
Rev. James R. Stein, pastor of the  
church.

Careful preservation of the earliest  
books of the Vermontville colony tells  
the story of pioneers from East Poult-  
ney, Vt., members of the oldest Union  
church in America, who bought 5,000  
acres of Michigan land to establish  
a little Vermontville. They arrived in  
1836 and the church was officially or-  
ganized, February 28, two years later  
with 16 members. Since education  
and religion were incorporated into  
the articles of the Union colony a log  
cabin which served as both school-  
house and church was one of the first  
community buildings erected. In 1843  
the Vermontville academy replaced it,  
now restored and known as the chapel.  
Here the Rev. W. U. Benedict was  
pastor and first principal of the  
academy. One of the oldest living  
members of the church and pupil of  
the academy is his daughter, Mrs.  
Anna B. Marsh, formerly of Lansing,  
now of Dimondale, who was born in  
1844.

The church of today was dedicated  
in 1864. In the log cabin days the Rev.  
Sylvester Cochrane was the first pas-  
tor, coming with the colony. The Rev-  
erend Benedict, Seth Hardy, Charles  
Temple followed and for the church of  
today Orange H. Spoor was first pas-  
tor. In all 22 pastors have been in  
charge. During the 100 years but four  
clerks have served.

Glamour of the past attends the  
story of the church bells. The first  
was purchased by the ladies of the  
church, and later sold to the Vermont-  
ville schoolhouse for \$70. The second  
one was purchased from a New York  
firm for \$440, and when it rang on the  
day of the 50th anniversary it cracked.  
The bell was replaced for an additional  
\$100 by the bell firm and it is in the  
tower today.

### Vermontville's First Church



Above is a photo of the chapel at  
Vermontville, one of the pioneer  
churches of the village. It also once  
was the home of an academy.



MRS. ANNA BENEDICT MARSH

One of the oldest living members  
of the Vermontville church and a  
daughter of an early day pastor.