

# Central Methodist Church

WOODWARD AND ADAMS AVENUES

DETROIT 26, MICHIGAN

Office

23 EAST ADAMS AVENUE

Telephone Wo 5-5422

*Ministers*

HENRY H. CRANE  
E. SHURLEY JOHNSON  
JOHN SAFRAN

October 17, 1955

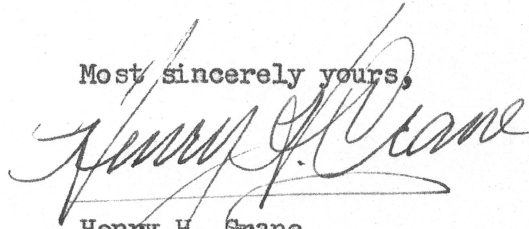
Mr. Lester F. Downing  
Alton Bay, New Hampshire

My dear Brother Downing:

The clippings showing the picture of the famous old Mt. Washington steamer, and the blessed old bell that you so gallantly saved from the junk heap and have now so generously promised to the little Union Church on Meredith Neck, reached me just the other day upon my return from a lecture trip. I shall certainly prize these ~~two~~ bits of precious paper, one dated July 26, 1937, and you may be sure that when the bell is installed in the little church next summer we shall have another beautiful write-up in the Meredith News, as also in the Alton Bay paper, I hope, apprizing all the people of the final resting place of this lovely bell, and of your own generous spirit in making it possible for us to give it such a worthy position where it can call people to worship God each Sunday.

Hoping that you are feeling much better and that your good family are all well and happy, and with every good wish to you and many thanks for all your kindness, I am as ever,

Most sincerely yours,



Henry H. Crane

hhc:s

LACONIA  
JULY 3-1940  
LACC

# ION IN NEW HAMPSHIRE

in the Rochester Courier)

## Mount's Brass Bell At Alton Bay

ALTON BAY, Jan. 3—Burning to the water's edge at The Weirs last week of the famous old side-wheeler, "Mt. Washington," brought back many pleasant memories to Fred Downing, associated with his son in the garage business here, as the elder Downing saw the ship launched, and they have at their place of business its 67-year-old, 175-pound brass bell that for many years was heard on Lake Winnepesaukee.

The bell is the property of Lester Downing, who bought it for sentimental reasons, as his father first heard the old bell ring 67 years ago last July 4, when the Mt. Washington took to the water and made its first trip around the lake.

The position of the bell on the steamer interfered somewhat with the process of properly oiling the machinery of the old craft, so it was dismounted. For some time Capt. Leander Lavallee, who was the owner of the boat for many years before he sold it a few months ago, kept the bell stored in the freighthouse of the Boston & Maine Railroad. Hearing that the bell was for sale, a party in Laconia made Capt. Lavallee an offer for it, but the amount was so low in comparison to its real value, it is said, that it annoyed the veteran skipper, and he decided that rather than sell it at that low price he would dispose of it for junk.

Loading the bell on a truck, Capt. Lavallee, so the story goes as related by Mr. Downing, started for Portsmouth. At the "Bay" he decided his gasoline supply needed replenishing and he stopped at the Downing garage. During the refueling Lester Downing noticed the old bell and inquired as to what the captain intended to do with it. When he was told, he thought it a shame a relic so closely identified with the earlier days on the lake, about which he had heard his father speak so many times, should wind up in a junk yard, so he made the captain an offer which was accepted on the spot. The bell was unloaded at the garage, and there it will remain.—Boston Globe.

## PEAL OF SHIP'S BELL BRINGS BACK BOYHOOD MEMORIES TO DOWNING

ALTON BAY, N H, July 5—Mounted near the Downing Garage, the 175-pound brass bell from the famous sidewheel steamship Mt Washington was rung today to welcome the holiday, and to one man in particular its noise had a pleasant sound.

Fred Downing, associated with his son, Lester, in operating the garage, sat on the bank of Lake Winnepesaukee as a boy and heard the bell ring for the first time 65 years ago yesterday when the boat was launched. The old boat, in command of Capt T. Leander Lavallee, is still plying the waters of the lake.

When the bell interfered with oiling the machinery, Capt Lavallee took it down and for years it was stored away. A few days ago he decided to sell it, and Downing bought it for sentimental reasons.

