

Church at McDuffietown Destroyed

article appearing in *The Reveille* (Seneca Falls) in December 1936

Fire starting from an overheated hot air furnace about 5:30 o'clock Wednesday afternoon completely destroyed the McDuffietown Methodist Episcopal Church, with a loss estimated at more than \$10,000. The structure on the McDuffietown Road eleven miles south of Seneca Falls and four miles southeast of Fayette fell an easy prey to the flames as a strong southeast wind was blowing. There was no water to fight the fire with, and the Seneca Falls firemen who responded to a call for help did valiant work in saving adjoining property. The firemen stayed on the job for more than three hours, rendering valuable assistance, and checking a blaze that started on the Fred Becker farm, a quarter of a mile northeast of the burned edifice. Large pieces of burning wood and embers were blown to the Becker farm, alighting on the roof and haystack, and only thru fine work by firemen and neighbors was this place saved. The fire was discovered in the church by Fred King, who went to assist his brother, Charles King, sexton. Prayer service is held in the church each Wednesday evening, and Mr. King was getting the church heated for the occasion. The furnishings of the church, including the organ, pews, books, supplies, and other furnishings of a well appointed kitchen and community room were destroyed. The church was completed and dedicated in February, 1884. It was erected at a cost of more than \$3,000, nearly all the labor being donated by members. The bell in the tower, which fell at the height of the fire, was a gift from the Methodist Episcopal Church here. The church was a prosperous rural church, with a membership of more than 100. The auditorium seated more than 200, and a large dining room, kitchen and community hall were features. The first church on the site was erected in 1830 when \$200 was raised for the purpose. In 1857, the church was rebuilt and enlarged at a cost of \$1,200. In 1883, money was again raised and the new structure erected. Rev. E.H. Van Scoy of Ovid is pastor of the church. No plans are as yet made for holding services or for rebuilding the structure.