

Spring 2014



UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST HISTORY AND HERITAGE SOCIETY



Annual Conrad Wright Lecture: May 6

"Unitarians, Universalists, and Slavery," the annual Conrad Wright Lecture, will be given by Dr. Christopher Cameron on Tuesday, May 6, 2014 in the Sperry Room at Harvard Divinity School at 7:00 p.m.. This event is co-sponsored by the UUHHS and HUUMS, the Harvard UU Ministerial Students.

Chris Cameron says, "Much of the scholarship on religion and American abolitionism focuses on evangelicals, however religious liberals played a key role in the movement from its inception. This talk will explore the disparate ways that liberal ministers engaged with the institution of slavery, whether as proslavery thinkers, colonizationists, or radical abolitionists. It will examine the theological underpinnings of liberals' views on slavery, as well as the differences between Unitarians and Universalists' engagement with the institution.

Cameron is an Assistant Professor of History at the University of North Carolina Charlotte. He received his MA and PhD in American History from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and a BA in History from Keene State College. His research and teaching interests include early American history, the history of slavery and abolition, and American religious and intellectual history. Cont'd pg. 2



Got the Time?

Read the Wikipedia article on the First Universalist Church (Elgin, Illinois) for more information on the church shaped like a what? (see pg.3)

New biographies in DUUB

Recent posts to the on-line Dictionary of Biography include a Unitarian Supreme Court Justice, one of England's first women Unitarian ministers, and an Australian Unitarian minister who studied at Eureka College in Illinois. (See pgs. 2, 4 & 5)

Volunteers Needed

If you are interested in serving on the History & Heritage Society board or working with one of our on-going projects, please get in touch with me (or any UUHHS board member) before (see pg. 5)

Wright Lecture Cont'd

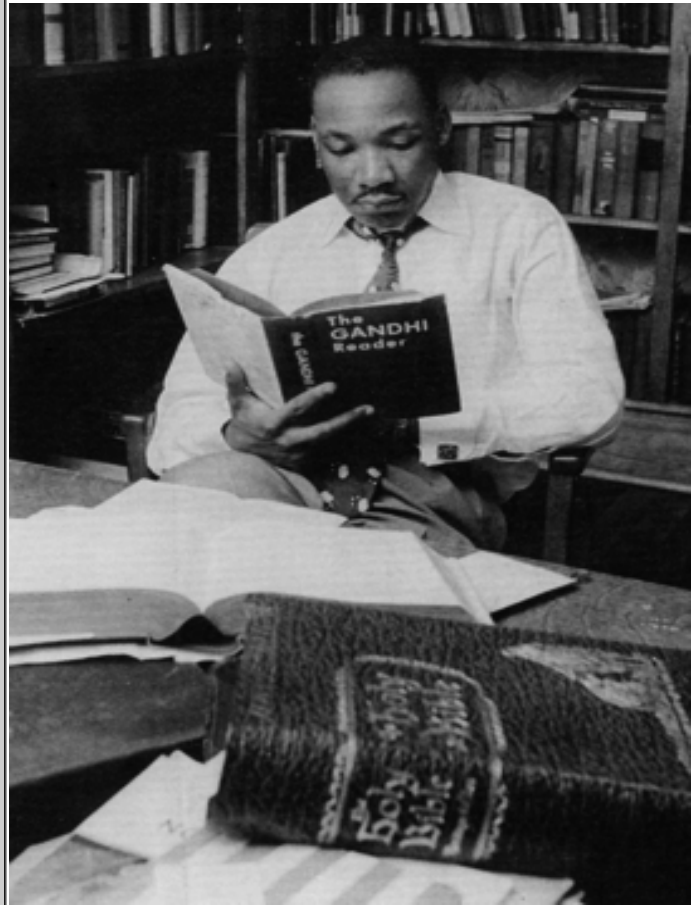
Cameron's first book, entitled "To Plead Our Own Cause: African Americans in Massachusetts and the Making of the Antislavery Movement," will be published by Kent State University Press in June 2014, and he is currently working on two monographs: one exploring liberal religion and slavery in America, and the other examining African American freethinkers from the 19th century to the present. Cameron has received fellowships from the Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History, the Peabody Essex Museum, the U.S. Department of Education, the Massachusetts Historical Society, and the National Endowment for the Humanities.

Harold Hitz Burton (below)

(1888-1964) was a Unitarian layman, lawyer, and politician who served as Moderator of the American Unitarian Association (AUA). After three terms as mayor of Cleveland, Ohio, he was elected to the United States Senate and in 1945 appointed to the United States Supreme Court by President Truman.



Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. is reading a first edition copy of Homer Jack's, The Gandhi Reader; a source book of his life and writings, (1956). Homer Jack was the minister at the Unitarian Church of Evanston, Illinois, 1948-57.

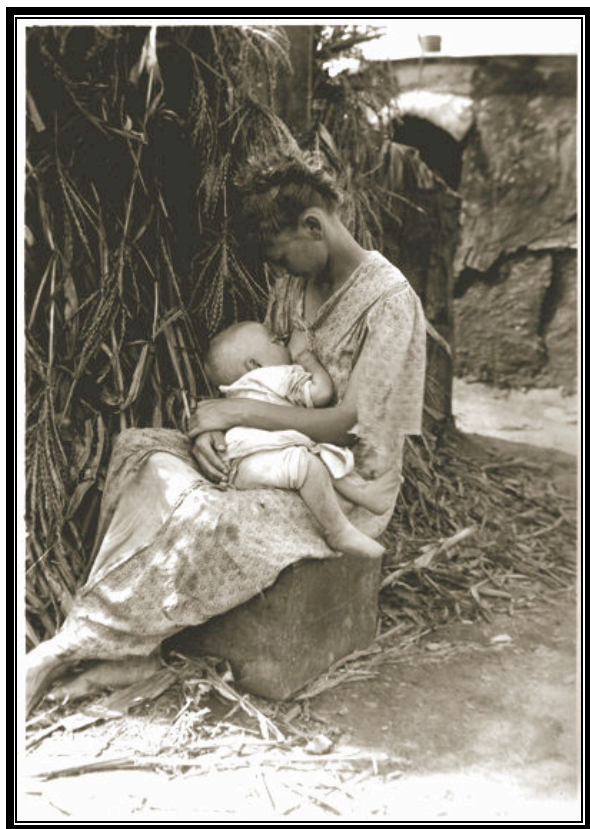


An excellent publicity photograph; the book-lined study, the clear view of the Gandhi Reader cover and the large "Holy Bible" in sharp focus in the near foreground all point toward careful staging by an experienced PR photographer.

Homer Jack began attending meetings of the **Fellowship of Reconciliation** at the University of Chicago in 1942. The next year he helped organize a civil rights sit-in and he participated in one of the first Freedom Rides in the Border States and South in 1947.

Correction:

There was an error in the fall 2013 newsletter. Thanks to John Hurley for suggesting the correction. It was Joseph Jordan (1842-1901) who was fellowshipped in 1889, not Joseph Fletcher Jordan (1863-1929).

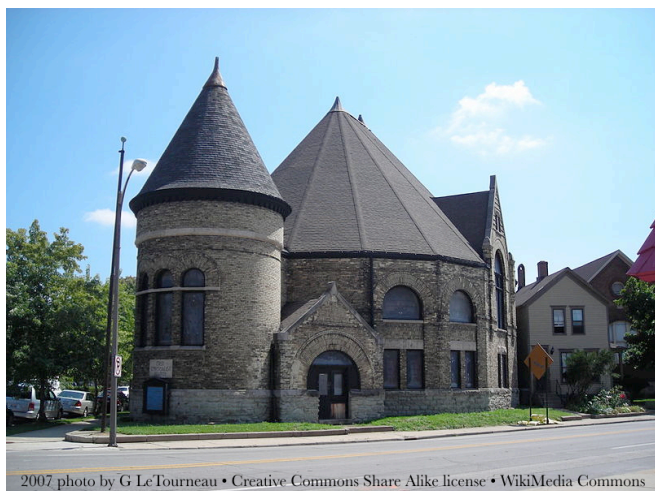
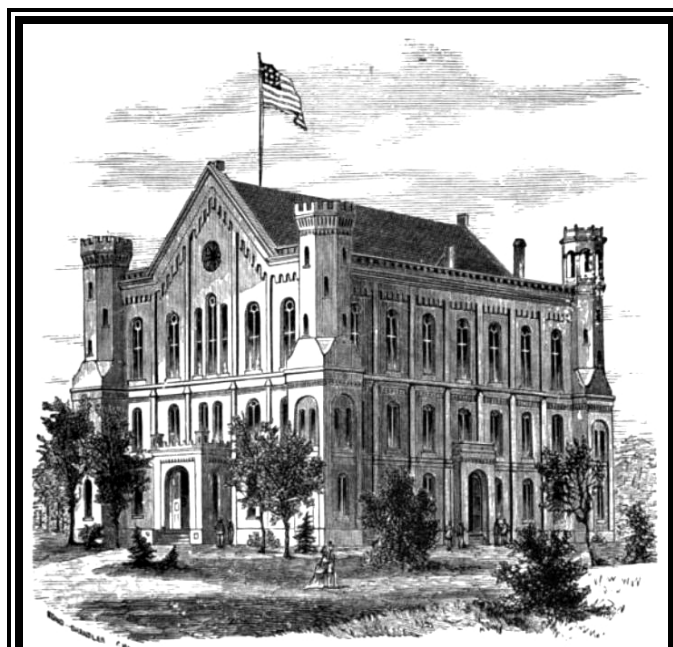
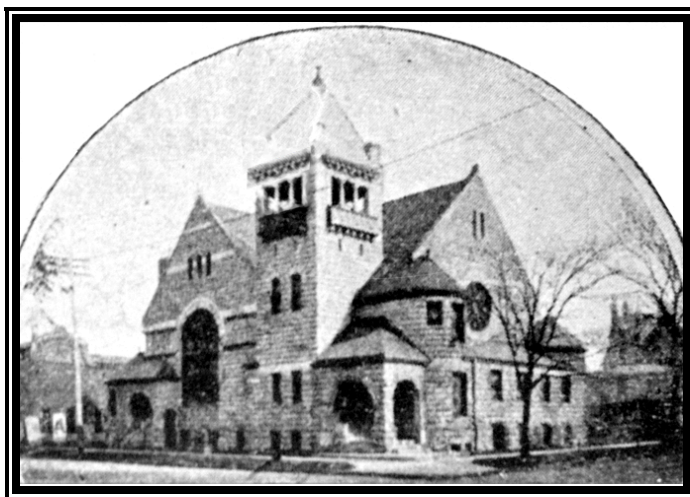


The Cornstalk Madonna, (left) a popular photograph was taken by Universalist minister, Orin Edson Crooker on May 15th, 1916. The mother in the picture is sitting on a wooden box next to cornstalks, feeding her child. It was taken on a farm near Hoopeston, Illinois.

Orin Crooker, born in Tekonsha, Michigan, was the son of Unitarian minister, Joseph Henry Crooker and Frances Burt. He was 22 years old when his father married Universalist minister Florence Ellen Kollock in 1896.

Orin Crooker received his BS from the University of Wisconsin and studied for the Universalist ministry at St. Lawrence University. He ministered in Rutland, Vermont, 1901-05; Woonsocket, Rhode Island, 1905-08; Cleveland, Ohio, 1908-10; and Hoopeston, Illinois, 1910-1917.

Shortly after taking *The Cornstalk Madonna* photograph, Crooker was called to minister in Galesburg, Illinois (right), home of the Universalist school, Lombard College. He left the Galesburg ministry in 1919 and worked as an editor and freelance writer for five years before being called to “the church shaped like a watch,” the First Universalist Society in Elgin, Illinois. His step-mother, Florence Kollock Crooker died there in 1925.



2007 photo by G LeTourneau • Creative Commons Share Alike license • Wikimedia Commons

Recalling Donald Harrington

The UUHS chat-list discussion thread on Transylvania got Bill Baar to thinking about Harrington. He passed along this excerpt from the Chicago Tribune article on Harrington's ordination in 1939:

Taking part in his ordination this evening will be Prof. James Luther Adams of the Meadville Theological school; Dr. Sydney B. Snow, president of the school; Dr. Charles Lyttle executive secretary of the Chicago Unitarian council, and the Rev. Lon Ray Call, secretary of the Western Unitarian conference.

The People's Liberal church, although holding no affiliation with any denomination is a member of the Chicago Unitarian council. It became one of the well known churches out on the southwest side of Chicago due to the ministry of Rev. Rufus A. White over a period of 43 years.

In connection with the appointment of its new pastor, the church congregation will sponsor a unique exhibition of Hungarian handiwork at its annual bazaar Friday evening in the church. Most of the pieces of embroidery, hand painted earthenware, and furniture were brought here in September by the Rev. Mrs. Harrington from her native Transylvania. The Rev. Mrs. Harrington is considering plans to organize and head a Transylvania Unitarian congregation here in the city.

Neither Vilma Szantho Harrington (1913-1982) nor Donald Szantho Harrington (1914-2005) have biographies in the Dictionary of UU Biography

Cyprus Richard Mitchell (below) (1881-1955) was a liberal Australian minister who lived, worked, and studied in America. During the First World War, he worked in Russia for the YMCA. After starting his career with the Disciples of Christ he soon moved on to more liberal congregations. In his later years he led Unitarian congregations in Australia and New Zealand.



Cont'd: **Volunteers needed:**

before May 30th. We are currently working on our board and committee structure for the upcoming 2014-2015 year.

Major UUHHS projects include the tri-annual History and Heritage Convocations (next one is in 2016), the Journal of UU History, which is published annually, the history and heritage contest for youth and seminarians, the annual Conrad Wright Lecture, our society newsletter, and the Dictionary of Unitarian & Universalist Biography (DUUB). The society also has a number of grant-funded and shorter-term projects including; encouraging congregational history efforts, collecting recent women's history documents, document digitization, making out-of-print books available, archiving society minutes and financial records, (cont'd next pg)

and answering queries from religious history scholars.

Most of our work is done via e-mail and the Internet. If you have the time and the interest we'd love to hear from you. Please get in touch with any UUHHS board member or me.

Kate Walker, UUHHS President
KWalker@uuma.org

2014 UU History and Heritage Prizes

Seminarian History Prize \$400 awarded in 2014

The Seminarian History prize will be awarded for the best research essay on Unitarian Universalist history. Essays should be approximately 15-25 pages in length, and they must draw on primary sources and be organized around a clear thesis. Persons currently enrolled in an M.Div. program and/or who are Candidates for Ministerial Fellowship are eligible to participate. Deadline: June 1, 2014

Religious Education Prize \$400 awarded in 2014

The Religious Education Prize will be awarded in 2014 for the best original curriculum created since 2010 covering some aspect of Unitarian Universalist history. Both professional and volunteer religious educators may submit curricula; however, curricula commissioned by the UUA are not eligible. Curricula for children, youth, or adults are all eligible. Deadline: June 1, 2014

Please direct submissions and questions to Dan McKanan at dmckanan@hds.harvard.edu. As appropriate, winning submissions may be considered for publication in the *Journal of Unitarian Universalist History*. In addition to the \$400 award, all winners will receive a free one-year membership in the Unitarian Universalist History and Heritage Society.
bv Dan McKanan



Thank You to Holly Hendricks and Elz Curtiss

Holly Hendricks has been assisting us computer-challenged historians for a number of years. She was serving us as co-moderator with Elizabeth Curtiss for the UUHS chat list for the past seven plus years. Previously Holly had been on the UUHS board and had worked with UUHS and UUWHS to build and maintain websites and web presence. Holly hosted the UUHS board at her house for our annual July board retreats.

In addition to her moderator job, Elz Curtiss was on the UUHS board and edited the UUHS newsletter. Both recently stepped down as co-hosts of the UUHS chat list. The UUHHS Board thanks them for all their efforts over many years.

Margaret Brackenbury Crook (1886–1972) was a British Unitarian minister, women's suffragist, peace activist, and religious studies professor. She was the first English woman to be fully trained for the Unitarian ministry at Manchester College, Oxford University, as well as the first English woman to be granted sole authority over a large church. Her first call was to Norwich's famous Octagon Chapel shown above. She is best remembered for her path-breaking writings on feminist biblical analysis and theology, which she articulated in her book, *Women and Religion* (1964).



**Octagon Chapel in
Norwich, England**

Annual Meeting Announcement

All are welcome
Saturday, July 19 2014, 11:30 a.m.- 1
p.m.
includes lunch.
Exact location in Massachusetts TBD
RSVP minister@fpwatertown.org

Hot Off the Press

Your *Journal of Unitarian
Universalist History*, vol
XXXVII, is on its way to your
homes! You will find this to
be another strong issue with
many high quality
contributions. It's in the mail!

Membership Renewal!

Your membership expires in June of the year on your mailing label. To renew or extend your membership, contact: Paul Sprecher, UUHHS, 27 Grove St., Scituate, MA 02066, or email membership@uuhhs.org. You can also renew ONLINE at uuhhs.org/Join. Simply print out the form, fill it in, drop it in the mail, or use PayPal option from that page.

UU Collegium

An Association for Liberal Religious Studies



Collegium
Conference
November 14-17

2014 Collegium

The 2014 Collegium conference will be held Wednesday, November 19 to Saturday November 22, 2014 at the Mission San Luis Rey Retreat and Renewal Center, five miles inland from Oceanside, California. The Center is a 45 minute drive from the San Diego airport.

Our Distinguished Guest this year will be Dr. Anthony B. Pinn, author, professor, theologian, and humanist. Dr. Pinn is Agnes Cullen Arnold Professor of Humanities and Professor of Religious Studies at Rice University in Houston, Texas. He has an MDiv, MA and PhD from Harvard University.

For more information: <http://www.uucollegium.org/>