

Latter-Day Saints Church



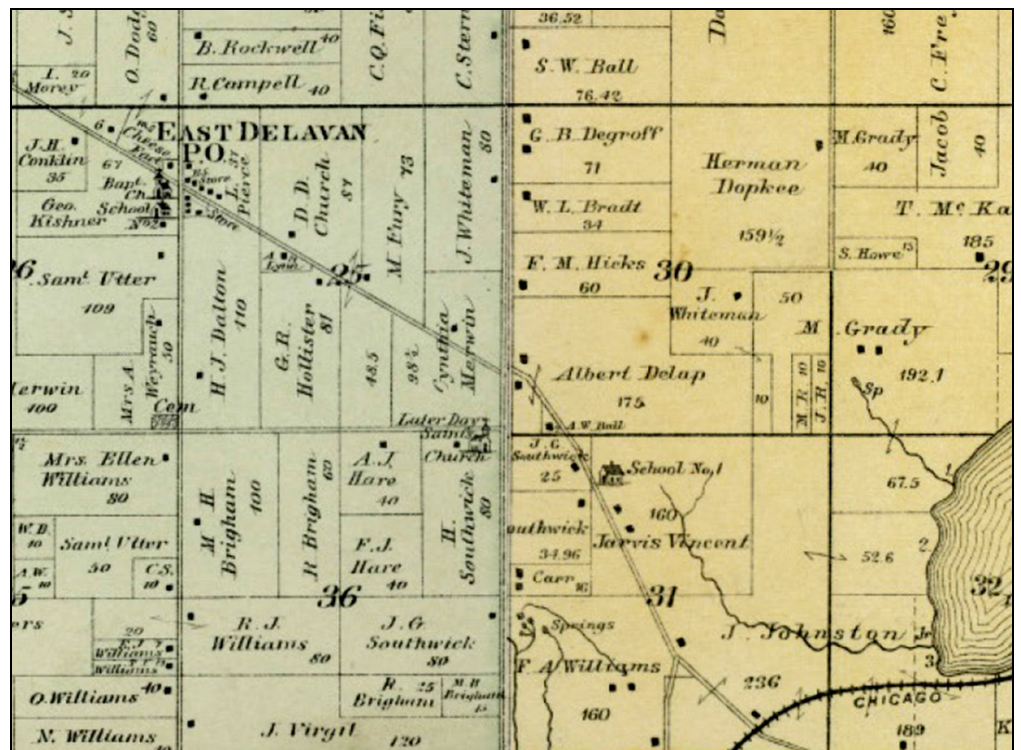
It may be of interest to know something of the early history of the building on the corner of Bailey Road and Highway 67.

The building was built in 1888 by members of the Reorganized Church of Jesus of the Latter-Day Saints on land donated by member Henry Southwick. Charles Burr, another church member was the architect and supervised the construction while the group of 40 members gave liberally of their means and time for its building.

The humble little white church with a modest tablet above the door that read: Latter-Day Saints' Church and a belfry with the bell that called members to worship sat at the edge of Henry Southwick's cornfield on the top of the hill north of Williams Bay within view of Geneva Lake. Looking in the four directions from the church, one would have been able to see fields of corn, yellow wheat waving in the sunlight, and

a few well kept farmhouses and barns shaded by trees that were hundreds of years old.

1891 plat map showing the location of Latter-Day Saints Church and the land owners in nearby areas of Delavan and Geneva townships.





Anthony DeLap Residence

The congregation was formed three years earlier at the Anthony DeLap home located what was known as DeLap's Corner, now the corner of Highway 50 and 67.

The settlement included several families which had come from Hancock County, Illinois, where in 1838 the entire following of Joseph Smith had settled and founded the cities of Nauvoo and Plano. Others had come from James J. Strang's 1844-1856 settlement called the City of Voree, on the western edge of Burlington, Wisconsin.

Some of the members of the church during its existence included: Henry Southwick and wife; Anthony Delap and wife; Charles Burr, wife and daughter Stella; Albert Hare and wife; Willis McDowell and wife; Lester Williams and wife; Gene Gaylord, wife, and daughter Daisy; Fred Ball and wife; Frank Ball and wife; Albert DeLap and wife; Mrs. Squires, mother of Mrs. McDowell; and Ed Williams.

This list was provided to Frank M. Van Epps, editor of Bay Leaves in the summer of 1935 by Mrs. Paul DeLap, wife of the son of Albert Anthony DeLap and grandson of Anthony Albert DeLap.

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This list was provided by Mrs. Katherine DeLap in the summer of 1935 to Frank Van Epps, editor of Bay Leaves. Mrs. Delap was the wife of Paul DeLap, son of Albert DeLap and grandson of Anthony DeLap.

The church prospered and baptized many members, the first to be received being Mrs. Emma C. DeLap. By the mid 1920s church membership had dwindled to just a few, after many members had moved to areas with larger communities of members of the Latter-Day Saints in Illinois, Iowa and Missouri and the church was closed.

Title to the church property was given to the main body of the Latter-Day Saints Church which had their main office in Independence, Missouri.

The history of the Latter Day Saints Church as written in the August 1, 1935 issue of Bay Leaves Vol. 3 No. 12 follows.

The sect believes thoroughly in the Bible and Jesus and except for its organization and the belief in the Book of Mormon could feel at home in other church groups.

Joseph Smith claimed and submitted proof sworn to by several that in 1823 an angel visited him and again in 1827. This time to reveal to him the bible of the Western continent. Though written on gold plates and bound together with gold rings in a strange language, he was able to translate it with the aid of the Urim and Thummin which accompanied it and thus write the "Book of Mormon" which he published in 1830.

Dissensions arose in the group of followers over the question of polygamous marriages and many of them broke away and formed an independent body. This local group being followers of the new sect which still believes that Joseph Smith did not countenance the plural marriage and point out that the Book of Mormon contains strong denunciation of polygamy.

Joseph Smith and his brother Hyrum were shot to death in Carthage, the county seat of Hancock County, Illinois, on the night of June 27, 1844.

The group believes in the power of healing by the laying on of hands by the Saints and that today as of old the Lord is revealing himself to his followers and that it is possible to be a prophet and tell of God's will to men.

It was to Mr. and Mrs. George Hotton that the idea of using the abandoned building for a place to hold the practices for the plays came one day in passing the building and through Mrs. Paul DeLap taking the matter up with the home office in Independence, Missouri, a lease has been secured.

Some day the Belfry Players envision the possibility of owning the land and building.

Articles Reference:

Ancestry.com - Reorganized Church of Jesus of the Latter-Day Saints Records for East Delavan Members.

Bay Leaves. Vol. 3 No. 12 August 1, 1935

Ancestry.com - DeLapp family tree