

Delinquency Problems Unchanged, Says Mrs. Downs, Retired Social Chief

Twenty-seven years of faithful service to the youth of Onondaga county ended last week for Mrs. Margaret Downs, 521 Park ave., when she retired as investigator for the child welfare board.

During those many years thousands of boys and girls came under her care—"I've seen the best and the worst—and the worst were never too bad," reminisced Mrs. Downs as she looked over a clipping scrapbook.

"I don't think delinquency problems have changed basically since my first work on the mayor's hospitality committee," said Mrs. Downs. "Young boys and girls have the same difficulties and get into the same scrapes then as now."

"I learned about preventive measures being better than curative ones then, and that's been the principle I've worked with all these years. And children are always eager and anxious to be helped. You find that out when you try to help them."

Mrs. Downs was the first woman appointed a county probation officer, when she took office in 1918. She served six years. At one time she was sworn in as a deputy sheriff, with other welfare officers.

Her first social work began in 1917, when she aided soldiers in their problems at Camp Syracuse, as a member of the mayor's hospitality committee, under Mayor Walter Stone.

She served 11 years on the county board of child welfare, with an office in the courthouse, and then was transferred to the city board, when the county board was abandoned, and served six years on the city board until her retirement.

Her career as a social worker did not cause her to neglect home life. She was married to Edward Downs, who died five years ago, and has six children, some of whom have followed their mother's example in choosing social service as a career.

Edward Downs is an investigator for the department of labor; Mrs. Gerald McMahon is a hearing stenographer for the department of labor, and Miss Dorothy Downs is school nurse at Nottingham school. Another son, PFC John Downs, is serving at Wright Field, Ohio.

She has two other daughters, Mrs. John G. Priest and Mrs. John McMahon, and 17 grandchildren.

Born in Ireland, Mrs. Downs came to Syracuse as a child with her parents.



MEMORIES—Mrs. Margaret Downs, retired after 27 years of social work, recalls highlights of her many years of service as she looks over her scrapbook.

EDWARD S. DOWNES

The funeral of Edward S. Downes, who died Friday at his home, 521 Park Avenue, was conducted from the home at 9 A.M. today and at 9:30 in St. John the Evangelist Church where a high mass of requiem was celebrated by the Rev. Francis Horrigan, assisted by the Rev. J. Robert Long in the sanctuary. Burial was in St. Mary's Cemetery. Bearers were Joseph Denmark, William Hipkins, Clayton and Harvey Avery, Edward Downes and Louis Gaurnier.