



Front - Title/Description

Ossian Sweet House

African American physician Ossian Sweet and his wife, Gladys, purchased this house in May 1925. When the Sweets moved into their home on September 8 white residents who objected to blacks moving into the neighborhood formed a crowd on the street. The next day hundreds of people converged on the corner of Charlevoix and Garland Streets intent on driving the Sweets from their home. The mob threw rocks and bricks at the house while the Sweets and nine others took refuge inside. In the evening shots rang out and a white man was killed. The police charged the people inside the Sweet house with murder. The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People hired attorney Clarence Darrow, who argued that people, regardless of their race, have a right to protect their homes.

Significant Date:

Two World Wars and the Depression (1915-1945)

Registry Year: 1975 **Erected Date:** 2000

Marker Location

Address: 2905 Garland Avenue

City: Detroit

State: MI **ZipCode:**

County: Wayne

Township:

Lat: 42.37019600 / **Long:** -82.98432000

Web URL:

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Dr. Ossian Sweet

The murder trial of Dr. Ossian Sweet, his wife, Gladys, and nine others was one of the most celebrated cases in Detroit's legal history. The Honorable Frank Murphy, a future Michigan governor and U.S. Supreme Court justice, presided, and eminent attorney Clarence Darrow defended. The trial ended in a hung jury with the judge declaring a mistrial. Sweet's brother Henry was tried separately and acquitted. After the trial, Ossian returned to the medical practice he had started in 1921 following graduation from Howard University in Washington, D.C., and study in Vienna, Austria. His wife and daughter died of tuberculosis in 1926. In 1929 Sweet cofounded Good Samaritan Hospital, which became a tuberculosis hospital in 1936. Ossian Sweet lived in this house until 1944. He died in 1960.