

[Butler, Wayne Co. NY]

ANOTHER NEW SOCIETY

Letter from Br. Allen Fuller

Wolcott, July 4, 1831

*Brs. Skinner and Grosh:*—In delaying to write to you until this time, I have been actuated by a desire to be able to communicate something which might be interesting. I have engaged to preach in this vicinity (Butler and this place) one half the time for three months, which was the extent which I would consent to be employed at that time. The other half the time I design to devote to the preaching of the Gospel in other places in this region.

I found the friends of God's universal and impartial grace in this vicinity alive to the cause which they have espoused. The meetings I have held were well attended, and the people listened with engagedness to the word spoken. But I have the satisfaction of being able to state other evidence of the progress of our cause. Notice was given out on the first Sabbath which I preached in Butler, that a meeting would be held on the following Thursday, at which all who were favorable to Universalism were requested to attend. At the time appointed they met and formed a Society to be known by the appellation of "The first Universalist Society in the town of Butler, Wayne county N.Y." And on Saturday last, at an adjourned meeting of this society, a Constitution was adopted, which now bears the names of twenty-four men as subscribers to the same; nearly all of whom are heads of families. Several others are expected to join with us as soon as opportunity presents, but how great a number more will come forward than at present, I am not prepared to determine. The Constitution is so drawn as to admit of females' becoming members of the society, and there is good reason to believe that a number of them will avail themselves of the opportunity thus presented of expressing their attachment to the cause of the Gospel, which is good tidings of great joy to all people.

The officers of this society for the present year are Lemuel Colbath, Esq., Secretary, and Orestes Hubbard, Treasurer; Orestes Hubbard, Trustee for three years—Jacob Butterfield, for two year, and Erastus Fuller, Esq., for one year, from the first Monday in June last. The following is a copy of the Preamble and Constitution.

"We, the subscribers, believing in the existence of one Supreme God, as the proper object of religious adoration and worship,—that the bible contains a revelation from him,—that Jesus is the Christ, the true Messiah, the Mediator between God and men,—that by his resurrection from the dead he brought life and immortality to light, and gave us the glorious assurance of the resurrection of all mankind, and their reconciliation to God,—and that we are under obligations to obey God, and follow the example of Christ,—and being desirous of promoting the cause of Christianity by the preaching of the Gospel of Christ, which is good tidings to all people, we do associate ourselves together by the name of "*The First Universalist Society in the town of Butler, Wayne county, New York,*" and adopt the following

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## CONSTITUTION.

ART. 1. The officers of this society shall be a Secretary and Treasurer, to be chosen annually; and three Trustees, one of whom alternately shall be elected every year, according to the laws of this State; and any other officers which may from time to time be thought necessary.

ART. 2. The annual meeting of this society for the choice of officers, and the transaction of business, shall be holden on the first Monday in June, at which time it shall be the duty of the Treasurer to make a faithful exhibition of his accounts with the society; and of the Trustees to lay before the society an account of their doings. And, besides the annual meeting, whenever a majority of the Trustees, or any five members of the society, shall deem it necessary, a meeting of the society shall be called. And all meetings of the society shall be warned by the Secretary, whose duty it shall be to post up, in a public and conspicuous place, a written article of the time, place and objects of such meetings, eight days, at least, before the time of such meeting; and if religious services are attended within that time, notice of the meeting shall also be given by the person officiating in the services.

ART. 3. No other moneys shall be raised by this society but such as are voluntarily subscribed for the objects stated in such subscription; and all such monies shall be at the disposal of the Trustees, to be by them appropriated to the objects intended by the contributors.

ART. 4. Any person wishing to join this society, shall become a member by signing the Constitution.

ART. 5. Should any member wish to be dismissed from this society, to join any other, or not, the Secretary shall give such member a discharge, and, if required, a certificate of said member's standing in this society, and make a record of the same.

ART. 6. We will endeavor, according to the best of our ability, to sustain a Christian character, and to act towards all men according to the teaching of Christ. But should difficulties arise between members of this society, or between them and others, we will endeavor to obtain a settlement of the same by reference, or other conciliating measures, without an appeal to the civil law.

ART. 7. This Constitution may be altered or amended in the following manner. The specific alteration or amendment shall be offered at a regular meeting of the society, and if a majority of the members present are in favor of adopting the same, they shall assign the time of a meeting when it shall be definitely acted on, which meeting shall not be within eight days of the time at which the proposed amendment or alteration was offered; and at that meeting, if two thirds of the members present so determine, the alteration or amendment as first offered, shall become a part of this Constitution, but not otherwise."

*Evangelical Magazine and Gospel Advocate, Utica NY, Sat. 23 Jul 1831*

Transcribed on 9 Nov 2011 by Karen E. Dau of Rochester, NY