

## Town of Afton, Chenango County, New York Churches

The First Universalist Church of Afton was originally incorporated as "The First Universalist Society of the town of Bainbridge," at a meeting held in the school-house in the Kirby settlement September 14, 1818, of which Matthew Long and Thomas Humphrey were presiding and returning officers. James Johnston, Reuben Kirby, Ebenezer Landers, James Davidson, Stephen Stilwell and James H. Humphrey were elected trustees. Their house of worship was erected in 1818. How long this organization continued there is no record to show, but that it exerted a wide and powerful influence for many years thereafter the records of the Baptist and Episcopal churches abundantly testify. It was re-organized as "The First Universalist Society of South Bainbridge," May 5, 1855, at a meeting held at the Universalist Church in South Bainbridge, (Afton,) and presided over by Rev. Chas. S. Brown, the pastor. Noble Buck, Reuben Kirby, Thomas Humphrey, Murlin Jackson, Stephen D. Pratt and Philo Landers were elected trustees, and a constitution was adopted. The records of the society subsequent to 1855 are very meager and furnish very little definite information in regard to its history. Rev. J. G. Bartholomew commenced his labors as pastor June 22, 1856, preaching half the time, and closed them April 18, 1858. Rev. W. Delong commenced preaching here one-fourth time May 14, 1865, but how long he continued does not appear; neither do the records show who filled the interval between 1858 and 1865. The desk was occupied every Sabbath in 1867 by Rev. J. F. Porter. The church was again organized under its present name February 20th, 1860. Rev. T. L. Dean filled the office of pastor from November 8, 1874, to May 1, 1875, after an interval of two years of partial inactivity. Our informant, who is a member, says, "The Society is in a low state and has the appearance of becoming extinct, as there is not life enough in the present members to do anything towards keeping up the organization."

Smith, James H., *History of Chenango and Madison Counties, New York.*  
(Syracuse, NY: D. Mason & Co. 1880).