

Dedication of the "Indian Castle Church"¹

The old church structure situated on Castle Creek in Danube, Herk. co., familiarly known as the "Indian Castle Church," from its having been used as a defence against the Indians in the Revolutionary times, has been remodeled and modernized, and is to be dedicated to the uses of man's intellectual, moral and religious nature, in the worship of the one True and Living God, on *Thursday, February the 7th*. It will be dedicated as a Union Church, the Baptists, Dutch Reformed and Universalists uniting in remodeling and fitting the church structure for religious uses; the friends of universal reconciliation, however, meeting somewhat over one half of the expense incurred in the repair. It is expected that there will be a religious service in the morning, afternoon and evening, but the order of arrangements has not yet been determined upon by the Committee. There will be refreshments at the church and in the vicinity for those who come from a distance. All friends who can are invited to be present.

G. W. S. [George W. Skinner]

Christian Ambassador, Auburn NY, Sat. 26 Jan 1856

Transcribed on 2 Feb 2013 by Karen E. Dau of Rochester, NY

¹ This building was undoubtedly the earliest church home of the First Universalist Society of Rockton, which in 1908 became St. Paul's Universalist Church of Little Falls.

Dedication of the Castle Creek Church

This church structure in Danube, Herkimer co. N.Y. was built in 1769, by Sir William Johnson, for the Indians. It was afterwards, in Revolutionary times, used as a fort in the war against them. In 1820 it was remodeled, and again in 1856. The residents in the vicinity of this ancient Castle united their means and labors and fitted it up for a "Union Church." The Presbyterians, Methodists, and Universalists are joint owners—the latter having paid the largest share of the expense in the remodeling and modernizing of the building. It was the general expectation, if not the special agreement, that as it is a *Union Church*, the Dedicatory services would be held on the 7th inst., (as noticed in the *Ambassador*,) by a Union of clergymen as representatives of the respective above named Denominations. The house was filled to overflowing, (notwithstanding the incessant snowfall), and Rev. Mr. Morris (Presbyterian) and Rev. Mr. Cole (Methodist) of Little Falls had entered the desk before Revs. G.[George] W. Skinner, W.[William] G. Anderson and B.[Benjamin] B. Hallock (Universalists) reached the place. On the arrival of the latter, it was proposed, by and with the concurrence of the Trustees of the Church, to the Messrs. Morris and Cole, that we the Universalist preachers should take part in the service. They declined allowing us this privilege—perhaps we ought to say this *right*. They were then respectfully requested to read the following notice, with which request they peremptorily refused to comply.

NOTICE

"The services of the day will be resumed after a half hour's intermission, when a sermon will be delivered by the Rev. G. W. Skinner of Little Falls, and the Dedicatory solemnities observed. As this is a Union House and a Union Dedication, the clergymen of all denominations present, are cordially invited to take part in the exercises."

In the forenoon of the 7th, then, this church was dedicated by Revs. Messrs. Morris and Cole—the former preaching the sermon and the latter assisting. In the afternoon it was dedicated to the following order of services:—

1. Voluntary by the Choir
2. Reading of the Scriptures by Br. G. W. Skinner
3. Hymn
4. Introductory prayer, by Br. W. G. Anderson
5. Hymn
6. Sermon, by Br. G. W. Skinner
7. Anthem by the Choir
8. Dedicatory prayer, by Rev. B. B. Hallock
9. Anthem by the Choir
10. Benediction by Br. W. G. Anderson

Dedication of the Castle Creek Church

When we consider that it was the desire of a large portion of those who have paid from 10 to 100 dollars each in fitting and beautifying this church, that the Dedication should be a Union-dedication—when we look at the course pursued by these Rev. gentlemen in refusing to unite with us in the services—refusing twice to read the notice, and then leaving the church in the afternoon, we are reminded of the Christian law “Whatsoever ye would that men would do to you, do ye even so to them.” Have they set the precedent that when any clergyman of the respective Denominations above named, may officiate at this altar, the others shall keep away, and no notice shall by Presbyterians or Methodists of the future be read meetings of Universalists? But further comment is unnecessary.

We would not have made the foregoing facts public, had we not a wish to caution the friends of our faith in regard to the basis or terms on which Union Churches in future may be built or remodeled. It is worthy of remark that the house was about as well filled in the afternoon as in the morning; so few had followed their “gallant leaders.” The people were attentive and interested in the services, and the choir performed their part to the admiration of all who listened, as might be expected when it is known that Br. Gay of Little Falls was the leader. We earnestly hope that our brethren in that vicinity will make arrangements to have stated preaching in this ancient structure, now a beautiful and commodious church, and that they will, by their steady zeal, and their consistent, Christian action, show those of the “contrary part” that we have a *better* faith and a *better* spirit.

G. W. Skinner
B. B. Hallock
W. G. Anderson

Christian Ambassador, Auburn NY, Sat. 26 Jan 1856

Transcribed on 7 Oct 2009 by Karen E. Dau of Rochester, NY