

[Royalton (Middleport), Niagara Co. NY.]

Universalist Church of Middleport

The first time that the doctrine of this denomination was ever preached in or near Middleport, Judge A. S. Baker procured the services of Rev. Linus S. Everett, who preached in a little frame school-house, at what was then called Ewing's Comers, half a mile south of Middleport. The text on that occasion was Acts ii., 39; and the first hymn sung was, "Come, Holy Spirit, Heavenly Dove," etc.

After this the Universalists met for worship in the brick school-house, which is now standing opposite the M. E. church, and occupied by Dr. E. L. Cole as a residence. They continued to meet here until their church was built.

When the society was finally organized. Rev. Mr. [Isaac] Whitnall was in charge. He was formerly a sailor; was on board Nelson's flagship at the battle of Trafalgar, and helped to carry Nelson below when mortally wounded. He was one of those eccentric ministers not often met with. He was succeeded by Rev. Messrs. [Charles] Hammond, Knapp, Kelsey, Van Campen, [Jacob] Chase, and others.

For a long time Mrs. Judge A. S. Baker was the only woman who would or did attend the Universalist meetings, and she was for a long time the only female member of the society.

In 1841 the society built the present church edifice, which is of stone and brick, located at the corner of Main and Church streets. The cost of the building was \$10,000[?]. The society has a sinking fund [endowment] of \$5,000.

In 1871 the society repaired the church at a cost of \$2,000, putting in a pipe organ, costing \$800.

There are at present thirty communicants, forty-five families connected with the congregation and an average attendance of 112. The value of the church property is \$15,000. Rev. Mr. Hutchins is the present pastor.

The Sunday-school connected with this church is also connected with the County Sunday-school Institute, which meets every two months. The following have been superintendents of the school: B. F. King, James Baker, Lucy Hurd, E. J. Swain, Samuel Ward, Ira Congdon, Violetta Spalding. There are eighty-four scholars on the roll, and the average attendance is fifty-three. The library has 177 volumes. Linus S. Freeman is the present superintendent.

Sanford and Company, *History of Niagara county, N.Y.*
(New York: Sanford & Co., 1878), p. 386

Transcribed on 18 Jul 2011 by Karen E. Dau of Rochester, NY