

[Victor, Ontario Co. NY]

VICTOR: A Homey, Busy Village That Was Once a Battleground
[short excerpts]
by Arch Merrill

A grandson of Jacob Lobdell, the man who guarded the Boughton Hill cattle that lonely winter of 1789, lives in Victor—on another hill just north of Main Street. I found the Rev. Nelson R. Lobdell tending his prolific hillside garden. He is a retired [Universalist] missionary who served in Japan from 1905 to 1920.

His home is a historic, as well as a picturesque spot. There was built in 1805-06 "The Proprietors' Church," to serve all denominations. The 81 subscribers owned the pews. But the noble experiment in religious unity failed when the various denominations began to quarrel of the time of services. The Methodists and the Congregationalists, who became the Presbyterians, pulled out and the Universalists held the fort until 1856, when they built their own edifice.

...In Nelson Lobdell's barn on the hill is a window that once stood behind the pulpit of the Proprietors' church.

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A tribute to Victor's tolerant spirit is the fact that the first Catholic Masses were celebrated, before St. Patrick's Church was built, in the basement of the Universalist Church.

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Back in 1851 the minister of the Victor Universalist Church was the Rev. Charles A. Skinner. He was the father of Otis Skinner, the actor, who was born in 1858 in Cambridge, Mass.

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