

Bro. Barry

Early member of

Universalist Church

Became a member

from Sutton Fisher Files

To all whom it may concern
This
may certify that Brother A. E. Barry of the
town of Peter, Ontario, Co. & G. has received
~~the fellowship of the Ontario Association of~~
Universalists as a preacher of the Gospel of
God our Saviour and we cheerfully re-
commend him to the kindness and confi-
dence of Universalist Societies in fellowship
with our order throughout the world.

Done at our annual Session in
Fairport Huron Co. O. this 10th day
of September 1835.

Stephen Miles } Mod.
Wm. Andrews } Clerk

[Victor, Ontario Co. NY]

Liberal.—The Universalist Society of Victor recently erected a church edifice. The contract was taken and erected by our townsmen William and J.M. Lauer. The contract was performed to the entire satisfaction of the society we believe, but did not prove remunerative to the builders.—The ladies of the Society generously gave a Strawberry party on the Fourth, the proceeds of which, \$100, they gave to the Messrs. Lauer. The act was a generous one and worthy of especial notice. In the competition which often prevails among builders, contracts are taken at rates which leave no margin to the builder unless he botches his job. When, however, to fulfill his contract to the letter, the builder makes a sacrifice, it is fair and just that he should receive the thanks of the party profiting by his loss. If anything more substantial than thanks is given, of course that is all the better, as in this instance. The Messrs. Laurer desire to make public acknowledgment to the ladies of the Universalist Society of Victor for their kind expression.

Union and Advertiser, Rochester NY, Tue. 7 Jul 1857

Transcribed on 15 Nov 2011 by Karen E. Dau of Rochester, NY

Victor, NY



Bolivar Ellis, Victor, was born in Victor February 25, 1833. He was educated in the public schools, and in early life was a farmer, surveyor, and conveyancer many years. Has been supervisor of his town three years, and justice of the peace twenty-four years. In the fall of 1882 he was elected county clerk and served three years. Was also loan commissioner three years. Mr. Ellis is a member of Milnor Lodge No. 139F. & A. M., and has been its master for some years. He is a member of the Excelsior Chapter No 164 R. A. M. of Canandaigua, and of Munroe Commandery K. T. No. 12 of Rochester. June 30, 1874, he married Frances M., daughter of Jacob L. and Joannah (**Farr**) **Lobdell**, of Victor, and they have one daughter, Isabel. Mr. Ellis's father, Henry, was born in the town of Florida, Montgomery county, December 10, 1798, and was a farmer. December 29, 1823, he married Isabel **Bennett** of Duanesburg, Schenectady county, and came to Victor April 5, 1824. They had six children, four survive: Nancy M., who married **Thomas C. Turner** (now deceased); Jane E., who married James B. **North** (deceased); Bolivar, and Daniel. Mr. Ellis's father, Samuel, was a soldier in the Revolutionary War. The ancestry of the family is Welsh and Scotch. Mr. Ellis is one of the deacons in the Universalist Church.

From the HISTORY OF ONTARIO COUNTY; compiled by Lewis Cass Aldrich; edited by George S. Conover; 1893;

Daniel Ellis, Victor, was born on the Ellis homestead, September 30, 1837. He was educated in the public schools and East Bloomfield Academy, and is a farmer. The house on the home farm was built in the year 1826, fifty acres of land has been owned by the family since the same date. Mr. Ellis is a member of Milnor Lodge No. 139, F. & A. M. of Canandaigua. February 8, 1856, he married Alice **Turner**, who was born in Salem, Wis. She died March 8, 1892. Mr. Ellis's grandfather's brother, Dr. Eleazer Ellis, was born June 20, 1760, was the first physician in West Bloomfield, and his grandfather, Samuel Ellis, was born May 28, 1762. Mr. Ellis has in his possession a paper recommending his grandfather, Samuel, to any Masonic Lodge in the United States.

From Victor Herald Newspaper 6 July 1895

Memorial Held at St. Paul's Universalist Church, Victor, N. Y. - Henry Ellis was born Dec. 10, 1798, at Florida, Montgomery county, N. Y. On Dec. 29, 1823, he married Isabel Bennett, of Duanesburg, Schenectady county, N. Y., who for fifty-one loving years walked faithfully by his side. Early in the spring of 1824, Mr. Ellis moved to Victor, arriving at what is now known as the Ellis homestead on April 6th of that year. Here he continued to reside for fifty-nine years, surrounded by children and children's children, three generations of whom revered the good patriarch and profited by his wise example. Mr. Ellis was descended on his father's side from Welsh and Irish ancestry, traceable to one Richard Ellis who came to this country in 1717 and a few years later married Jane **Phillips** of Easton, Mass. Of the fourth generation from these progenitors the subject of this sketch came uniting in his character the sturdy integrity and kindliness

of heart which predominate in those races across the sea, from which he sprang united with a New England tenacity of purpose so essential to a well poised, consistent life. Politically an unswerving Democrat, Mr. Ellis lived and voted his convictions without office holding. In religion, he was a Universalist, firm in the belief, strong in faith, abounding in good works. Henry Ellis died on Sept. 1, 1884, aged 85 years with undimmed faith in our heavenly Father. His last conscious breath voiced the christian's all-conquering trust. None of those whose lives we are reviewing today left more enduring example or one more worthy of imitation than Deacon Henry Ellis.

Victor Universalist church
 a motion made by the Rev.
 Nelson Lobdell and seconded
 by J. Sheldon Fisher was carried
 that the Universalist Society
 adjourn sine die
 June 5, 1958
 \$300 was given to the Bristol
 Universalist without a day being appointed
 for another meeting

Victor Herald, June 11, 1958

Universalism Ends Long Victor Stay as Society Disbands; Organization Dates to Pioneer Era

A total of 156 years of Universalism in Victor officially came to a close Thursday night after a vote at the annual business meeting and banquet held in the parlors of the Victor Methodist Church for 28 people. Only the Bristol Universalist Church now remains active in the county and that is now actually a community church.

With the last President, William J. Harsch, presiding, the motion of Rev. Nelson Lobdell, Secretary, to disband was unanimously carried. Mrs. Gulla Wilbur moved that the church funds be given to the Bristol Universalist church, and J. Sheldon Fisher's motion gave the church records to the Victor Historical Society.

The Rev. Thomas Billingham ushered in the Victor Universalist Society before 1802. Last Thursday the Rev. Donald Hoyt, pastor of the First Universalist Church of Rochester, and president of the New York State Convention of Universalists, gave the closing address.

Although no services have been held since the Universalist church building was sold about 1926 to the Minor Lodge of the Free Masons, the remaining members have held the Society intact until now.

In explaining the demise of such a strong and old church as the Victor Universalist Society, Mr. Hoyt pointed out how in the past

Universalism in general had out-Universalized itself. The very nature of its liberal attitude towards the individual and the strong belief in the dignity of man caused the church to lose potential members. This belief was so set that parents would not insist that their children join the church, but when maturity was reached they could join the church of their choice. Regardless of this, the greatest growth of the church was reached when other churches preached "hellfire" and the Universalists preached, personal dignity, and a "God of love."

This liberal attitude spread so now the doctrinal cleavages in the Protestant churches are not pronounced. Mr. Hoyt explained that in about every other generation Universalism regenerates itself and at the present time it is experiencing a rapid growth under efficient leadership.

In commenting on Mr. Hoyt's statement of the great tolerance Universalists had towards other

religions, Mr. Lobdell recalled how Victor's St. Paul's Universalist Church encouraged the local Catholics to organize by granting them the use of their church facilities. As a teacher missionary in Japan, Mr. Lobdell along with several other liberal foreign preachers was given the high honor of a speaking participation, with Shinto and Buddhist priests at the ascension to the throne of the father of the present Emperor of Japan in 1914. The day was, when the Universalist Church was a great influence in the community. Half of those men who have been Supervisors of the Town of Victor appear on the records as Universalists.

Outstanding names connected with this church have been Rev. Otis A. Skinner, and Rev. Charles A. Skinner. The son, Otis Skinner, was an actor, formed his own company and produced many plays. His daughter, Cornelia Otis Skinner has earned her right as a famous actress of today.

As the final act before closing the books of the venerable society, Rev. Nelson Lobdell, Secretary, assisted by Mrs. Russell Simonds, sadly penned the words, "adjourned sine die," which means without a day being appointed for another meeting. — J. SHELTON FISHER.

sheldon

Universalist Society Sells Church To Milnor Lodge, F. & A. M.

At an adjourned annual meeting of the First Universalist Parish of Victor, N. Y., held in the church parlors, Thursday evening, March 1st, the trustees of the church were instructed to transfer the brick church building on Maple avenue, known as St. Paul's Universalist Church, to Milnor Lodge, F. & A. M. of Victor, for a consideration of \$2,250. All of the furnishings of the church, with the exception of the pipe organ and a few other articles reserved, are included in the sale. The building is to be converted into a Masonic temple.

The Universalist society, which by the sale of its property expresses its belief that the preaching of its liberal doctrine will not be resumed in Victor, under the name of Universalism, was formally organized in 1826. For about a quarter of a century previous to that date the Universalist doctrine had been preached here and as early as 1822 the Genesee Association of Universalists met with the Victor adherents of that faith in the old Proprietors' Church on the hill, where the Lobdell and Webster residences now stand. It is believed that the first Universalist sermon delivered in Victor was preached in 1802 by Reverend Thomas Billingshurst, who settled in Pittsford in 1800, and went about preaching, without pay, in private houses, barns and schoolhouses. A picture of Mr. Billingshurst and his wife hung on the wall of the church parlors, last night, as the members of the parish voted to let their house of worship pass from their hands.

Regular services had not been held in the church for nearly two years, the congregation which once filled the audience room having dwindled to about 30 souls because of the death or removal from town of many of its members.

St. Paul's Universalist church was built in 1856 at a cost of \$6,000. The lot upon which it stands was purchased from Melancton Lewis, Victor's first school teacher, for \$1,000. To their new building, from the Proprietors' Church where they had previously worshipped, the Universalists brought their church bell, which they had purchased and installed in 1834. That bell, which was sold with the building, is the first church bell ever rung in Victor and was for many years the only church bell in the town. The first pipe organ ever brought to Victor was placed in the Proprietors' Church by the Universalists in the early '40's. The organ was transferred to the new church in 1856 and did duty there until 1869, the centennial year of Universalism in America, when it was replaced by the pres-

ent organ, which was the second pipe organ brought to Victor. The case of the first organ still does duty as cupboards in the church kitchen. The church was dedicated on January 28, 1857. The dedicatory sermon was preached by the pastor, the Rev. John Mather Austin, a member of the distinguished family to which Cotton Mather belonged.

The lack of young people in the church was probably the most powerful influence in the minds of the people of St. Paul's when they were called upon to consider the question: "To be or not to be," and decided in the negative. Yet only forty years ago, Victor Universalists were at the front in young people's activities. The first chapter of the Universalist Young People's Society was formed in Rochester by the Rev. L. B. Fisher and immediately afterward the second chapter was organized in the Victor church. From those chapters grew the nation-wide Young People's Christian Union of today. The Universalist Union, a weekly issued in the interest of the Young People's Society, was printed in Victor in 1868 by Rev. J. F. Leland, who purchased the Victor Herald plant and published both papers. The Union afterward became the organ of the national Y. P. U.

Two of the young men of the Victor parish became Universalist ministers. Alfred Constantine Barrey entered the ministry in 1835, filled important pastorates in several states and served with honor in the Civil War. Nelson Lyman Lobdell, great-grandson of Jacob Lobdell, who was one of Victor's first settlers, was ordained in 1805, served as a missionary in Japan for 14 years, and returned in 1920, with his family, to Victor, where he now resides.

Among the many changes which the passing years have brought is the breaking down of denominational lines, of St. Paul's to associate themselves, which makes it possible for the people happily, with other churches of the community. The Universalist doctrine of infinite love and ultimate victory long ago spread itself beyond the confines of Universalism and shed its glory and hope upon the austere, fear-inspiring and hope-paralyzing theories by which early religionists sought to turn the minds of humanity from temporal to spiritual realms. The many good men who have stood in the pulpit of St. Paul's church, the many good men and women who have occupied its pews have fostered the spirit of brotherhood among men, have helped to make the Fatherhood of God a reality to men, and their works shall live after them.