

UNIVERSALIST CHURCH of WOLCOTT (Site)
HISTORY SHEET
General Information

Name of Structure: Universalist Church of Wolcott

Address: 5991 New Hartford St

Parcel ID: (544803) 75117-16-826292

Atlas: 1853 "Church"; 1858 "P Church"; 1874 "W.W.Paddock";
1904 "L.W.Mead"

When Built / Mason: Unknown

When Razed: 1867

Why: Disrepair and abandoned

Original Owner: Universalist Church trustees

Subsequently: Methodist Protestant Church; W. Paddock (razed, sold as lots)

Original Use: Church

Subsequently: Church until razed

Photographs: None

Description: Unknown

References

Fulton Postcards: [Rochester NY Democrat Chronicle 1906 - 1902.pdf](#) (5/4/1906)

<https://fultonhistory.com/Newspaper%205/Rochester%20NY%20Democrat%20Chronicle%20Rochester%20NY%20Democrat%20Chronicle%201906%20Rochester%20NY%20Democrat%20Chronicle%201906%20-%201902.pdf>

"WOLCOTT'S OLD STONE CHURCH — Foundation Wall Uncovered by L.M. Mead — Built By Universalists

The Church Was Erected in Early Days of the Village and Flourished for Many Years — Was Used by Methodists for a Time

Lewis M Mead, while excavating for foundation walls for an addition to his house on New Hartford St struck an old foundation which has proved to be the walls of a Universalist church which stood there many years ago. The walls are in a perfect state of preservation and will be re-used instead of building a new one.

Inquiry among some of the oldest Wolcott residents disclosed the fact that a cobblestone church was erected on this spot at a very early period, so far back in fact, that it was referred to in 1857 as the 'old stone church' and at that time had fallen somewhat into decay.

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Nearly all the old settlers who came into this section from Connecticut at the beginning of the century were Universalists and they erected this church, and the denomination grew and flourished for many years, holding services regularly. About 1850s the denomination had become somewhat weakened and in a year or two no regular services were held, and the church was used for concerts, school exhibitions, and various public gatherings.

In 1857, when a small party of members left the local Methodist Episcopal Church and formed the Methodist Protestant Church, they secured the stone church as a meeting place. The Universalists gave them the use of the church on condition that they put it in repair and keep it so. One of the first trustees of the new church society was Henry S Cornwell, who is now living at the age of 91 years. Soon some disagreement arose between the two denominations and the Protestants secured a church of their own.

About 1867 the old church having been practically abandoned, the lot was offered for sale and purchased by W. W. Paddock, who tore down the old building and sold the lots where the residences of L. W. Mead and Dr. S. W. Houston now stand. A remarkable thing in connection with the sale of the property is that the \$440 for which the lot was sold has never passed out of the local trusteeship until about four years ago, when the general society of the Universalists asked for the money, which had accumulated until it amounts to \$1,500.

The local society passed out of existence many years ago, but the funds were placed in the hand of three faithful trustees, Henry Wadsworth, Royal Matthews, and George Marble, all of whom are now dead except the first one. For many years Mr Matthews cared for the fund and then Mr Wadsworth, and although there was not local society the fund was carefully guarded and added to year by years by the loyal trustees."

Fulton Postcards: [Wolcott NY Lake Shore News 1904-1908 - 0272.pdf \(12/14/1905\)](#)
<https://fultonhistory.com/Newspaper%202/Wolcott%20NY%20Lake%20Shore%20News/Wolcott%20NY%20Lake%20Shore%20News%201904-1908%20pdf/Wolcott%20NY%20Lake%20Shore%20News%201904-1908%20-%200272.pdf>

"Wolcott M.P. Church ... This society was organized in 1855 by the Rev. Ira H Hogan, he being the first pastor. ... Originally there were only seven members ... The church was erected in 1868 ... Before that the services had been held in the abandoned Universalist church which stood on the site of Dr S. W. Houston's present residence on New Hartford street."

Note: The 1904 atlas indicates this was the second house on New Hartford St north of Washington St on the west side.