

Bethinking of Old Orleans

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PEW RENT

THIS INDENTURE,

Made the 26th day of October, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and thirty five between "The Trustees of the First Universalist Society in Gaines," of the first part and Caleb Knapp of the second part. **WITNESSETH,** That the said parties of the first part, for themselves and their successors in office, in consideration of the sum of \$65.00 in hand paid, the receipt whereof is hereby acknowledged, and confessed, do hereby Grant, Bargain, Sell, and Convey unto the said party of the second part, their Heirs, Executors, Administrators and Assigns forever, **ALL** that certain part or parts of the Meeting House occupied as a place of worship by the First Universalist Society of Gaines, Orleans County and State of New York, designated as Slip No. 7C. **TO HAVE AND TO HOLD** the same, with all the privileges and appurtenances thereunto belonging, for the uses and purposes designed. And it is hereby Covenanted and Agreed, and Understood, by and between the said parties, that the same shall not in any way be altered unless by consent of the parties of the first part or their successors in office. And that the said House is to be used and occupied as a House of Worship for the First Universalist Society in Gaines.

In Witness Whereof, the Clerk of the Board of Trustees of the said Society, has hereto set his hand, and affixed the common seal of this Society, this 26th day of October, in the year one thousand eight hundred and thirty five.

Signed, Sealed, and Delivered,
in the Presence of

Caleb Knapp

John Proctor
Loren Stile

It was generally customary back in the 19th century for members of a church to own their own pew. The accompanying indenture from the First Universalist Society of Gaines, now the historic Cobblestone Church, is in essence, a deed to a pew or a slip as it was called. The grantee was Caleb Knapp who paid \$65.00 for his pew which granted him "to have and to hold" that certain part of the meeting house forever.

ries in a meeting house were designated for those who could not afford to own their pew up front on the main floor. By the early part of the century this custom of paying pew rent or buying a church pew had generally been given up. In fact the "Free" in Free Methodist in part, meant free pews, as one of the Free Methodist founders, Rev. Loren Stile did not believe in pew rent.

You will note that this indenture is dated Oct. 26, 1835 and is signed by John Proctor, Clerk of the Board of Trustees and witnessed by A. Hutchinson.

Renting one's pew or slip was a means of raising money to support the church. Often the gal-