

# A not-so-nice prank

The following story is taken from a letter written in 1874 by W.C.

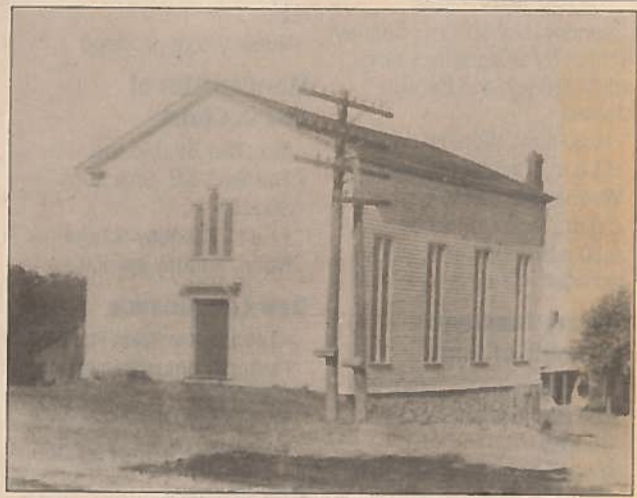
Ruggles of Gaines to Alamanzor Hutchinson. The incident described in this letter took place at the Baptist Church located in Gaines. This was the first church building erected west of the Genesee River and was last used as the Town Highway garage. It was torn down a little over twenty years ago. Our photo of it was taken around 1910.

Mrs. Dewey, they youngsters called her Mother Dewey ... what am I about to relate of her must have happened about 1837. She was a positive character, and ruled the realm of her home. Her husband stayed with her and she had a daughter and they lived on the Gaines Basin Road in the first house south of the Ridge Road. It was a log house and in those days the woods grew near it...she was a conscientious member of the church, perpetual attendant, where she slept away much of her life. I remember her well as she used to come down the road to church. Though poor in this world's goods, she was fat in person, and rich in robust health. She waddled along with head and shoulders erect with a big brown workbag slung to one arm and a pinch of snuff and red bandana handkerchief swinging in the other hand. (In the church her seat) was in the back, directly under the front of the gallery. There she sat and slept, with nodding head and mouth wide open, all the same whether the sermon was dull or inspiring. It was one summer Sunday that the old lady had taken her usual seat, had gone into her usual sleep and

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the preacher had gotten well into the depths of his sermon, when two roguish boys in the gallery above her discovered her head directly under them thrown back unusually far, and a dark hold in her face where her mouth ought to be. They itched to do something, it was too strong a temptation for mischief-loving boys. Instantly, a flyleaf from a hymn book was chewed to pump. It was held over her in consultation and passed from hand to hand in trial. Finally it dropped. It was



a plumb drop, a bulls eye shot. She choked, rolled over, coughed and spat it out. Her friends rushed to her, opened the window, fanned her, propped her up and talked of apoplexy. She said there wasn't any apoplexy, nothing of the sort but didn't say what the matter was. Her dignity was fearfully insulted, and her indignation against somebody

upstairs knew no bounds. In the melee two boys made lively tracks downstairs and outdoors.

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