

first one nominated as trustee, which office he held till his death, and once at least he was President.

We come now to the most important and the best beloved of all his labors: those in his connection with the people of God in church life. In the year 1817 the population of the whole county (which also included at that time West Nissouri, Oakland and Burford) was only 530, with but 78 dwellings, such as they were. The only church was a strict communion Baptist church in West Oxford, under the charge of Elder Mabee. This was a long distance from where Woodstock now stands, but it is known that some of the settlers attended service there. In the year 1822, on the 22nd of April, Elder Thomas Tallman of New York State visited the settlement; and, after preaching to the people, was requested to organise a church—the name given being the “First Free Communion Church of Oxford.” There were nineteen organic members, from families of old settlers whose names are quite familiar yet, but none of the name of Burtch. In the month of October, the same year, another church was organised at Horner’s Creek; and, on the 13th day of the same month, a council was called to ordain James Harris and Darius Cross to the work of the ministry—both having united with the First Church. In 1823 the Springford church was organised, and others later on.

We learn from the church record that, on the 28th day of August, 1824, Archibald Burtch was among the number baptised and added to the church; and that in the following December he was appointed deacon. It is evident, from the minutes of the church, that he at once entered fully into the spirit and labors of the church; for we find his name on almost every committee, council, and delegation; and almost all meetings held quarterly and some annual conferences were held in his barn, when the log school-house was too small for the number assembled; and such was his hospitality that he kept open house for all God’s people who came—invited or not.

In 1826 he was appointed church clerk. In every case of discipline—and they were frequent in the early history of the church—he always took a firm stand for personal purity, and consistent walk and conversation in every day life. I am informed by an aged brother of the Woodstock church who lived,