

## Rachel Oaks & the Verona Seventh Day Baptist Church

Partially edited transcription from *The Book of Records of the Sabbathkeeping Brethren In the Town of Rome and Verona Containing their Agreement or Covenant With their Names and Ages*. October 10, 1811. Transcription made by Merlin D. Burt 10/1/95 from copies of records made at the Seventh Day Baptist historical room, Janesville, Wisconsin. The various spellings of Rachel Oaks' name is as it appears in the original minutes.

The list of members has Rachel Oaks and Rachel D. Oaks as deceased members.

The Records of the first book actually run from November 17, 1809-February 19, 1841.

December 26, [1835]: Robert Dorman and Rachal [sic] Oaks joined the church.

January 20, 1838: The following persons admitted into the church Wells Kinyon, Rumina Dormont, Jemina Lutes, Abby S. Kinyon, Nancy A. Harris, Barbara Kinyon, Adelia E. Kinyon, Roxannah Green, Rachel Oaks.

March 10, 1838: the following persons united with the church: Joseph Lawton, Joseph Lawton, Jun., Nancy Lawton, Joanna Lawton, Anna Davis, Caroline Hazard, Anson Cowin, Robert P. Lawton, Franklin H. Williams, Augustus B. Harris, Joseph H. Hazard, Daniel Davis, Orvin A. Williams, Lanson B. Lawton.

July 27, 1838: At the regular church meeting convened at the Meeting House July 27th, 1838. Brother Daniel Williams chosen moderator. Church proceeded to business. The following preamble and resolution was presented for the consideration of the church. Whereas there are unfavorable reports circulating abroad respecting a matter of difficulty between Brother Samuel P. Marsh and Sister Rachel Oaks and whereas said reports are in their nature prejudicial to the characters of both the above named individuals and are also exerting an unholy influence against the cause of God and the church of Christ, Therefore resolved, that the church take the matter into consideration and refer it to the committee of inquiry and that they be ready to make a report at our next meeting. Resolved that the above resolution be adopted. Resolved that Brother Henry Williams, Jun., be added to the committee of inquiry.

August 10, 1838: . . . The committee to whom was referred the matter respecting Br[other] Marsh and Sister Oaks were not ready legally to make report from the consideration that but one of them had been able to see both the parties by consent of the church however be made his individual report [sic]. His report not being satisfactory was not adopted. The following resolution was then moved. Whereas the church is left in the dark respecting the report of the committee in regard to the settlement between Brother Marsh and Sister Oaks, therefore resolved that the clerk be instructed to request them both to attend our next church meeting and make a full statement of their deal and also of their settlement. Resolved that we adopt the above resolution. Resolved that this meeting be adjourned until three weeks from today at one o'clock PM at this place.

August 31, 1838: . . . The subject of the reports respecting Br[other] Marsh and Sister Oaks was then called up and the parties both being present made a statement of their deal and settlement after which Br[other] Daniel Williams moved the following resolution. Resolved that consider[ing] the reports respecting Br[other] Marsh is taking unlawful interest of Sister Oaks be a mistaken report. The motion was then taken on the foregoing resolution when two voted in favor of it and none against it. Resolved that the committee be discharged from making any further inquiries on the subject. Resolved that this meeting adjourn.

October 7, 1838: After hearing the records Brother Hiram Sherman moved the following resolution. Whereas the resolution passed by the church respecting Brother Marsh's taking unlawful interest of did embrace considerations that never had been recognized by any of the former proceedings of the church therefore Resolved that the resolutions be rescinded. Resolved that we adopt the above resolution. The following resolution was then moved by Brother Ichabod Williams. Whereas the church is still dissatisfied with proceeding[s] of Br[other] Marsh with Sister Oaks and whereas there are prejudices existing between Bro[ther] Marsh and some of members of the church. Therefore resolved that [we] call a council from some Sister Church and refer the matter to them for investigation and decision. Resolved that the above resolution be adopted. Resolved that we send a request to the Church in Scott to send us a committee for council. Resolved that the clerks be instructed to forward a letter to the Scott Church immediately. A complaint was then read which Br[other] Marsh had presented against the Church. Resolved that it be laid on the table. The following resolution was then moved by Brother Ichabod Williams. Whereas Brother Samuel P. Marsh did here at Church meeting indulge and manifest an unchristian temper and disposition and whereas he did also disturb the order of the meeting by rashly censuring the Church and wrongfully accusing and threatening them therefore Resolved that we consider it a violation of the rules of gospel order and an abuse of the church. Resolved that we adopt the above resolution. Furthermore Resolved that any member of this Church who shall be found guilty either in Church or public Meeting of censuring or rashly accusing or threatening the Church shall be called to an account for the same before the Church and unless he makes satisfaction by humble confession he shall be excluded from our fellowship. Resolved that we adopt the above resolution. A bill was then presented by Br[other] Ansel Cawel requesting his name erased from the Church Book. Resolved the bill be rejected. Resolved that we have a committee of five for the purpose of inquiring into public offenses. Resolved that Joseph L. Perry, Hiram Sherman, Wells Kinyon, Thomas Perry, Henry S. Burdick be said Committee. Resolved that we have a Committee of two to present to the Council the nature of the difficulty with Br[other] Marsh and also to forward all the testimony and facts connected with the same. Resolved that Ichabod Williams and Thomas Perry be said Committee. The minutes were then read and approved. Resolved that we adjourn without date. Closing prayer by Br[other] J. L. Kinyon.

November 4, 1838: Church met in Special Meeting together with the council from Scott. After prayer by Dea[con] Hubbard Church made choice of Eld[er] John L. Kinyon Moderator and K. J. Williams as Clerk pro tem. The Committee appointed to act in behalf of the Church proceeded to present to the council the nature of the difficulty with Br[other] Marsh. Brother Marsh objected to coming to trial and placed an adjournment on the account of the absence of Br[other] Henry Williams, Jun. whom he claimed to be an essential witness in the case. Resolved that Br[other] Marsh be permitted to state what he wishes to prove by said witness. Stated by Br[other] Marsh that he wishes to prove by said witness that he went with him to Sister Oaks and

that they there made a satisfactory settlement with each other and also that said witness reported it as such to the church and that it was done to the satisfaction of said witness and also that Eld[er] Kinyon did advise said witness to go and have the difficulty settled and that when he made report that Eld[er] Kinyon objected to its being received. It was admitted by the church that said witness reported the settlement to the church as a satisfactory settlement between the parties and also that it was done to the satisfaction of said witness. Admitted also that when said witness did report that Eld[er] Kinyon objected to its being received. All the essential points that Br[other] Marsh wished to prove by said witness being admitted on the part of the church the committee acting in behalf of the church presented to the council a declaration of the charges against Br[other] Marsh. Resolved that the complaint which Br[other] Marsh had brought against the church be referred to the council. Resolved that we take up the matter of Br[other] Marsh's censuring the church and refer it to the council. Resolved that we take up the matter of Br[other] Marsh's censuring the church and refer the to the council. The minutes were then read and approved. Resolved that we adjourn to meet at nine o'clock tomorrow morning at this place. The church together with the council met agreeable to adjournment. Prayer by Deac[on] Thomas Williams.

Church proceeded to business. After some conversation respecting the manner in which the several items in the declaration brought against Br[other] Marsh should be referred to the council it was resolved that the first two be submitted to the council for a final decision and that the last two for their advice. Brother Marsh then withdrew his complaint against the church. The church and council then proceeded to the investigation of the matter respecting the charges. After examining the testimony in relation to the charges Br[other] Marsh then acknowledged his wrong in censuring and abusing the church. Resolved that Br[other] Marsh's confession be satisfaction to the church. The council then retired to make up their decision respecting the first two charges which discussion was to be handed to Br[other] Thomas Perry to be forwarded to [the] Church at their next meeting. The minutes was [sic] then read and approved. Resolved the meeting be adjourned without date. Closing prayer by Eld[er] John L. Kinyon.

January 25, 1839: Church meeting opened with prayer. Br[other] Robert Williams Moderator. The minutes respecting the deal with Br[other] S. P. Marsh was then read the report of the council to which the difficulty between the church and S. P. Marsh as referred was read and received.

November 5, 1838 [sic]: To the Seventh Day Baptist Church in Verona. Your council to whom was referred the matter of difficulty between you and Samuel P. Marsh would submit the following as our decision from the testimony adduced. We believe the contract between Caleb Green and Br[other] Marsh and Sister Oaks was entered into understandingly with pure motives and in a manner to accommodate both parties and more especially Sister Oaks, therefore they ought to abide the contract but in consideration of Sister Oaks holding herself in readiness to pay if required and to resume the responsibility herself we think Br[other] Marsh ought to pay rent from the expiration of the first year subject however to the deduction of a fair amount for his liability to suffer loss by fire and otherwise and for services rendered by Mr. Green we therefore think considering all these circumstances that he ought to pay to Sister Oaks the sum of ten dollars. And our friendly advice to Br[other] Marsh is that he lay aside all prejudices and

hardness which may have heretofore existed in his mind towards the church and maintain his walk with the church by fulfilling his covenant obligation. Raymond V. Babcock, H. C. Hubbard, John Barber 3d.

Voted that we have a committee of two to notify Br[other] Marsh that the church has adopted the report of the council. . . .

January 3, 1839: Church meeting opened. Br[other] H. Sherman Moderator. Read the minutes of the last church meeting read the committee appointed to visit Br[other] S. P. Marsh. That the church received the decision of the council and to know whether he would comply. With their decision made report that he would not pay what the council brought in a motion and second that Br[other] Samuel P. Marsh be rejected.

September 27, 1839: Annual meeting of the church. . . Voted that we do not have a new trial respecting Samuel P. Marsh and the Widow Rachel Oaks according to their request. . .

*Book 2 of the church Record minutes begin March 14, 1841.*

September 12, 1841: Special church meeting. . . . Voted Joseph L. Perry and Br[other] A. P. Harris be clerks for the ensuing year. . . .

October 1, 1843: . . . Resolved that we approve the resolution of the general conference in relation to a day of fasting and prayer that the efforts which are being made in relation to the Sabbath may have the divine blessing.

September 22, 1844: . . . Resolved that Augustus L. Harris serve us as Clerk for the ensuing year. . . .

March 20, 1845: Regular Church Meeting. . . . The requests of Sister Rachel Oakes [sic] and Delight Oakes [sic] were laid before the Church after some remarks thereto it was Resolved that the clerk write and inform them that the Church cannot consistently grant them their request while they walk by faith and in obedience to the laws of God.

September 21, 1845: Annual Meeting. Voted Augustus L. Harris Clerk the ensuing year.

March 29, 1857: . . . The subject of the restoration of Samuel P. Marsh was presented and a resolution offered that Brother Marsh be restored. After remarks on the resolution, an amendment was offered and seconded that he be restored when he complies with the decision of the council called to settle that difficulty; which was rejected. The resolution was then withdrawn; and the following were passed by a majority vote. Resolved that the act of the church requiring Br[other] Marsh to pay ten dollars be and is hereby rescinded. Resolved that we deplore the long standing difficulty existing between the church and Br[other] S. P. Marsh and that the church is willing to forget the things that are behind and to extend to him the hand of fellowship and restore him to his original standing in the church.

May 31, 1857: . . . Dea[con] H. Sherman offered the following Preamble and Resolution. Whereas the church at its last regular meeting voted after due consideration did rescind a former

vote requiring Mr. S. P. Marsh to pay an award of a council in the matter with Widow R. Oakes [sic], Therefore Resolved we reconsider said vote. After a somewhat protracted discussion upon the subject the vote was called and lost--ayes 4. Noes 8. . . .

September 4, 1857: At a Special Church Meeting held pursuant to call of several of the brethren. Meeting was opened by prayer by Dea[con] Thomas Williams. Br[other] Henry Burdick was chosen Clerk pro tem. The object of the meeting was then stated by the moderator. Viz. To consider the difficulties existing in the church and make an effort to affect [sic] a reconciliation. After much informal conversation, and the reading by Br[other] Hiram Sherman of "a protest" against the action of the church in a church meeting held March 29, 1857, in rescinding a vote of the church requiring Br[other] S. P. Marsh to pay an award of the council, in favor of Widow Oakes [sic], and in restoring Br[other] Marsh to the fellowship of the church, which protest was presented by him to a select committee of the last association, the following resolution was moved by Br[other] H. Burdick. Resolved that we submit the action of this church as recorded in the church book, concerning the traversing of a matter between the church and Br[other] S. P. Marsh, to a council. After considerable discussion, the resolution was laid on the table until the next Annual Meeting. Minutes read and approved and meeting dissolved. D. P. Curtis Chm. H. Burdick Clk.

September 27, 1857: Annual Session. . . .The minutes of the last meeting were called for and read; after which the Resolution respecting the reference of a certain matter to a council, which was laid on the table was called up. Whereupon Eld[er] D. P. Curtis proposed to Amend the Resolution by striking out all after the word Resolved, Substituting the following. Whereas, a respectable minority of the members of the church profess to be aggrieved in consequence of the passage of the following act by the church at the meeting of 29th of March last. Viz. Resolved that the act of the church requiring Br[other] S. P. Marsh to pay ten dollars, be and is hereby rescinded--and Whereas in consequence of the grievance of said brethren, the union and peace of the church, and the interest of the cause of Christ is jeopardized--Therefore for the purpose of removing the cause of grievance, and restoring peace and harmony in the church, we do hereby mutually agree to refer the said act of the church to a council, composed of three judicious brethren from some sister church or churches, who shall be mutually chosen by the parties--for their decision: to say whether the church was justifiable in passing said resolution. And the church shall appoint two members of the majority to meet the council and explain the reasons for the passage of said act, and give such other explanations as the council may require; Also two members of the minority to be chosen by themselves to explain the grievance of the dissatisfaction, and give such other explanations as may be required; And it is mutually agreed between the parties that they will abide the decision of said council, and it shall be a satisfactory settlement of the difficulty between them.

The Amendment being seconded, it was discussed at length, and agreed to by a majority vote. After some more discussion, the question was taken on the original motion, and was lost: The motion as amended, contemplating a mutual agreement--and the majority voting for it and the minority voting against it. On motion, Resolved that we reconsider the above resolution. The reconsideration of it was then laid on the table for two weeks. Adjourned until two weeks from today at one O'clock p.m. D. P. Williams--mod[erator] H. Sherman Clk. pro tem.

October 12, 1857: . . . The resolution in relation to a certain matter to a council which was discussed and laid on the table at the previous meeting was called up for reconsideration. Let it be laid on the table till the next meeting.

November 29, 1857: The resolution that was laid on the table at the previous meeting was called up and some discussion had on it pending which the meeting dissolved.

March 7, 1858. At a special Church Meeting March 7, 1858 held pursuant to a call of the brethren (opened with prayer by) Dea[con] Daniel Williams. Mr. David P. Williams chose Chairman. Bro[ther] A. K. Bennett Clerk pro tem.

The chairman stated the object of the meeting to be to devise some plan that will settle the present difficulty in the church--after a somewhat protracted discussion of the matter, Dea[con] Ira Green offered the following Res[olution]:

Res[olved]. That we present the case of this church to a committee of three brethren, who shall be acceptable to the parties concerned to advise the church. Which Res[olution] Was carried. The following persons were announced as chosen as such committee: Dea[con] John Maxon, A. M. Whitford, Dea[con] Ephraim Maxon.

On Motion Resolved that the parties will abide the decision of said committee. On motion the following Res[olution] Was adopted. Resolved that each party appoint from brethren to set forth the case to the committee. On behalf of the church the following brethren were appointed. Dea[con] Daniel Williams, Rev.[?] D. P. Curtis, Henry Burdick, David P. Williams.

Res[olved] That the committee meet two weeks from next fourth day, March 24th.

March 28, 1858: . . . Dea[con] J. Maxon after visiting and conversing with several of the brethren both of the majority and minority and being assured that a reconciliation would be affected thereby recommended that Bro[ther] Marsh tender to the church ten dollars the award by the council from Scott in 1833 [1838] and that the church accept its [decision]. In accordance with the recommendation of Dea[con] J. Maxon. Bro[ther] S. P. Marsh tendered to the church ten dollars with his protest. On motion re. That the money and protest be received--that the protest be recorded.

Protest: To the Moderator of the 1st Seventh Day Baptist church in Verona. Brother Moderator. I remit enclosed ten dollars which I have held under the following circumstances. This church it is well known assumed to claim this amount of moneys [on] behalf of the Widow Rachel Oakes [sic] which I refused to comply with and the sequel you are fully acquainted with. About ten or twelve years since by the council of my friends I consented to comply with the demand and offered it (the money) to the church at a church meeting but the church refused to take it. I then placed it in the hands of Elder Chas. Lewis to hand over to the church. I supposed this would at least cancel their claim on me. The money was refused by the church as I was informed and Bro[ther] Lewis after words placed it again in my hands. Last year the church reconsidering the matter passed a Res[olution] Exonerating me from this claim as in their opinion not having been properly made and inviting me to take my place in the church. It [has] however been very apparent that different opinions have existed on the subject and the peace of the church been greatly interrupted by the action of the church. [Upon my?] learning that the paying over of this money will harmonize the feelings of the church, I pay it purely as a peace offering and not as a just claim. Verona, March 25th, 1858 (Signed) Samuel P. Marsh.

On motion of Ira Green, the following Res[olution] Was adopted. Res[olved] That a committee be appointed, to receive the money and to correspond with the widow Oakes [sic] and if she claims the money as justly her due to forward it to her. If she does not claim it to pay it

over to Bro[ther] Marsh to use as he sees fit. The clerk and Treasurer were appointed as such Com.

On Motion Res[olution] That the clerk correspond with the Widow Oakes [sic]. After some remarks Bro[ther] D. P. Curtis requested a letter for himself and wife. Resolved that his request be granted. Minutes approved. On Motion meeting dissolved.

[Letter to Rachel Oakes [sic] inserted in the minutes of the church record]

Verona, March 31st, 1858

Mrs. Rachel Oakes [sic] (that was)

Dear Sister,

I am appointed by the 1st Seventh Day Baptist church of Verona as a committee to correspond with you in relation to a matter that is of long standing. I refer to a difficulty in said church when you were a resident of Verona between Samuel P. Marsh and the church as on your behalf.

It seems by the records of the church and evidence that there was a difficulty reported as existing between yourself and Br[other] Marsh--wherein it was charged that he had taken some unfair advantage of you in Business matters, that the church appointed a committee to visit you and Bro[ther]. Marsh of which Henry Williams was a member--he reported to the church that he had visited you in company with Br[other]. Marsh and that the difficulty was settled. It further appears that you and Bro[ther] M[arsh] Both came before the church in open meeting where you on one or two several occasions stated that you had no claims on him whatever. That you were perfectly satisfied and it further appears that the church voted Satisfied. But after this the records say there were prejudices existing with some and the matter was called up by the church but not at your request. That the parties there agreed to leave the matter to a council from Scott which council advised Br[other] Marsh to pay you ten dollars which he refused to do on the grounds that he owed you nothing--that you yourself claimed nothing from him. But he offered to pay the money to the church which refused it and rejected him from fellowship--so the thing has stood till last summer when Brother Marsh was received into the church again. Some few members were not satisfied--claiming that he should pay you the ten dollars. The majority of the church thought differently as you yourself had publicly and privately freely declared that you had no claims on him. The dissatisfied did not claim it from him as your right but to keep his word good, he having agreed to abide the decision of the Scott council. Thus it has stood causing a great amount of trouble in the church till a short time since when by advice he paid the money over to a committee of the church to be sent to you if you claim it as your just due. If you do not as you have stated in times past [the money is] to be returned to him. I have thus briefly stated the case as the church understands it. And left now dear sister the matter is to your own conscience before God. If you claim the money it will be sent to you.

Yours truly, H. Burdick (Please answer soon)

June 6, 1858: . . . Dea[con] Hiram Sherman then offered the following. Resolved that the words "she claims the money as justly her due" on the fifth line of the resolution offered by Bro[ther] Ira Green at the last meeting be stricken out and on the seventh line the word "claim" be stricken out and insert "accepts."

On Motion the Res[olution] Was laid on the table. Bro[ther] Joseph Perry then called for the report of committee appointed to correspond with Mrs. Oakes [sic]. "The writer reported that he had written to her twice and received no answer." The Treasurer Bro[ther] H. Sherman then offered to report a correspondence he had held with her as one of the committee. This was objected to on the grounds that the treasurer was not appointed as a committee to correspond but was appointed to receive and hold the money to abide the results of correspondence by the clerk. Bro[ther] Sherman still claimed the right to read his correspondence and asked the decision of the moderator who decided him out of order. After some remarks by Brethren, Bro[ther] [A. G.] Lewis tendered his resignation as Mod[erator] And left the house. On motion his resignation was accepted. Bro[ther] Morris Langworthy was then called to the chair as Mod[erator] Pro Tem. Bro[ther] Sherman still claimed the right to report--again objected to on the same grounds as before. The moderator decided the objection well taken. Br[other] Sherman appealed to the house which maintained the decision of the chair. "On motion Res[olved] That Bro[ther] Sherman be permitted to read his correspondence to the church but not as a committee report." He objected to reading it. Bro[ther] Sherman moved to rescind the last resolution--put to a vote and lost. Minutes read and approved. On Motion meeting dissolved.

July 25, 1858: Church in regular session meeting opened with prayer by Dea[con] Ira Green. Dea[con] Daniel Williams chosen moderator. Minutes of the last meeting read. On motion the correspondence of the clerk with the Widow Oakes [sic] was called for and read. On motion Res[olved] That the correspondence be Received. Moved that the church will forward Mrs. Oakes [sic] the ten dollars and discharge the committee which was carried. Minutes read and approved. On motion meeting adjourned.

Jan. 30, 1859: On motion. . . Resolved that Albert Babcock be a committee to forward the money to Mrs. Oakes [sic] and get her receipt. Minutes approved. Meeting adjourned.