

Athol Sept-27<sup>th</sup> 1830.

Dear Brother,

I received your last letter in good season, & sh<sup>d</sup> have answered it ere this, had not my time & attention been occupied "about many things" in these "troublesome times". You gave me many precautions about + satanic artifices, & fiend like Malice of my opposers. We have had very good specimens of + devices of + enemies of evangelical religion. They have strained ev- nerve to carry their points, & resorted to some of + most illiberal & mean measures. At + first town meeting, they passed + vote by a large majority, not to employ a candidate a single Sab., unless he wd agree to exchange with all + neighboring congregational Ministers in regard to standing. I gave my refusal & + reasons of it at length, unto + committee, telling them th<sup>t</sup> I wd not take the pledge even among orthodox Ministers, & th<sup>t</sup> no candid & consistent Unitarian I do it. But it is almost useless for me to <sup>try to</sup> tell you + transactions of + last 5 weeks in this town, for I cannot in a single letter give you a proper outline. The orthodox tried

to get up a 2<sup>d</sup> Town Meeting, after some who voted  
for + "pledge" began to be ashamed of + thing. By +  
Management of + other side, + time of + Meeting was  
denuded a week, until they I have Unitarian  
marching one Sab. When + select Men got ready  
to issue + warrant for + Meeting, + constable I put  
be found to put it up; he had doubtless been got  
out of town by trick, so as to delay + Meeting. To cap  
+ climax, when + Meeting assembled, made up of  
"rag-tag & bob-tail", some bribed by hot toddy, some  
brought fr- out of town, & stage drivers, kept at  
home, &c, + Unitarian lawyer got up & kept + floor  
"till + going down of + sun," to weary out + pa-  
tience of + orthodox, & drive them off home. I. orthodox  
saw they were in + minority, & some went off home  
will closed with Unitarian liberality & courtesy.  
The Case Management, fixed several of + warning  
stamp, on + orthodox side. The vote fairly taken  
we probably have stood, about 95 or 100, to 80 orthodox. all  
I. liberals mustered ev- thing, for they feared very  
much th- + town we recall + vote about pledges as to  
exchanges, & then list me as a candidate or give me a call.

The Unitarians around here felt sure of this town. Neigh-  
boring orthodox societies had almost given it up, to  
be in future a strong hold of Unitarianism. The liberal  
party here & abroad have often boasted that there were not  
more than 6 orthodox men in town. They are now  
thunderstruck & mad as hornets to find an "evange-  
lical socy" formed of about 80 members including  
some widows who own property; worshipping in  
town houses; & myself hired for 3 months. I was pro-  
posed to go to commencement, & engaged to <sup>town</sup> ~~the~~ ~~town~~  
for no longer period. The opposition party are now  
well waded to think I did not go off, as I talked  
of. They would have been very glad to have me leave &  
the orthodox band desolate. I understand they charge  
the Gilliston with breaking & town to pieces. They really  
hoped to get the whole <sup>town</sup> under the Unitarian standard. We  
have on our side about 1/2 the property of the old socy, more  
than 1/2 the regular worshippers, most of the females of the ch. &  
all the males but 3. Many of the universalists who voted for them  
say they will <sup>not</sup> keep them little a Unitarian, & pay twice their  
old tax. They feel badly enough on the Unitarian side. We  
commenced a Saturday evening ch. prayer meeting

Last week. About 20 present. I am beginning to have confes-  
 sion meetings, & + prejudices of pres- against coming  
 meetings is doing away. S. Spirit of prayer & faith I trust is  
 ever-cresping in + chs. Some little seriousness is commen-  
 cing among some others. Pray for us. We stand in great  
 need of silent but effectual influences of Gods Spirit.  
 There is but 1 Male Member in + ch- under 40 years of age.

Attest Sep 28 1850

Rev. Mrs. A. Phelps  
 Woburn  
 Mass

George J. Williston  
 Sept 21/29-1850

I enclose you 3 dollars, viz. 1 from my aunt  
 from Cambridgeport, 1 from Mrs. J. Williston  
 from Woburn, & 1 from Mrs. J. Williston  
 from Woburn. I have also 1 dollar from  
 Mrs. J. Williston from Woburn.

I last week had a trying invitation fr- Berlin Cong. the hand-  
 some village, near Lonsdale, to come on immediately &  
 preach as a candidate 4 wks, in order for settlement as col-  
 league with Mr Goodrich if they were pleased. Had I not  
 been engaged for 10 week here, I think I shd have gone. Shall you  
 not come up to the Colcott ordination at Petersham on + 20 of  
 next month. Chickering of Bolton called on me 5 day. He is to  
 be there & probably Baldwin. I come & so spend a little time with  
 me & perhaps at + Missionary meeting at Hubbardston next day. G. D.