

Letter of Timothy Stillman to E. T. Foote containing extracts from the actions of the Buffalo Presbytery on 31 January 1844 preserved in the Foote Papers.
Transcribed by Doug Shepard, June 2015.

Friend Foote Yours came to hand on Friday and found me at home for one week. To comply with your request in full would require more time than it is in my power to bestow on such a subject at the present time. Our Presbytery have been taking action on the subject at almost every meeting for ten years and sometimes the resolutions &c have covered two pages for myself I was satisfied with the first action which was a full expression of sentiment in relation to the abominable Sin of Slavery – and I have regarded all action since as useless as pap a formal vote that two & two are four and just about as effective. Our resolutions have all been printed in the Evangelist and copies have been called for for other purposes. I do not know as our abolition friend will be satisfied with what we have done and resolved to do; but for one I am determined to resist any further action until a wise providence shall cast some light on the question and teach us how to act with more efficiency: but for the dictation of Stewart – Smith - Shepherd and the like, I feel that their light is the blackness of darkness in the Christians path & that the more we attempt to follow them the more shall we stumble – Until Alvan Steward – Gerrit Smith & other of like sentiment who call “the ministry a brotherhood of thieves” are set aside and men of a better spirit take the position they occupy in the ranks of Abolitionists – I cannot consent to take a position on the subject which will leave the impression on any mind that I am associated or identified with them in any respect.

I will copy for you the actions of Presbytery at Springville in January 1844 which perhaps contains the strongest action we have ever taken and which I presume is the action alluded to in your Letter. This was published in the Evangelist in February last I should think on the last page of the paper.

Dunkirk Dec 23^d 1844 Yours Tim^o Stillman