

Overlooked Orleans:

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An Albion parking lot was once home to a law office

By Matt Ballard
Orleans County Historian

This image shows Mrs. Jennie McGuire Leonard standing in front of her millinery located on North Main Street in Albion. The beautiful building constructed of brick was designed in the Federal style, often referred to as the Classical Revival style.

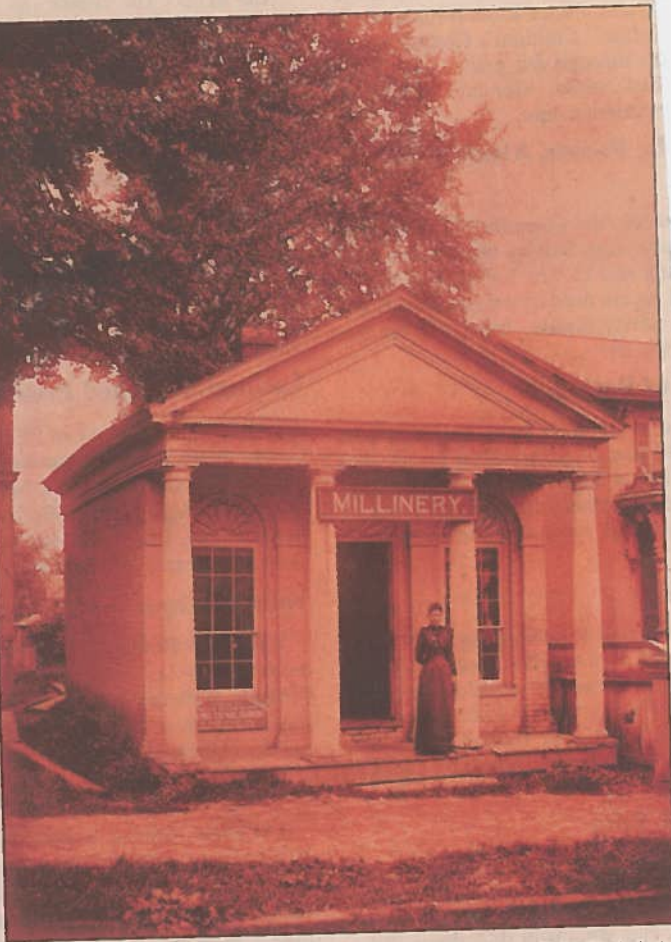
This type of architecture pre-dates the Greek Revival style that is often seen throughout Orleans County and structures of this type would have appeared as late as 1840.

Prior to serving as a place of business for Mrs. Leonard, the building acted as the law office of the Hon. Gideon Hard. Born April 29, 1797, to Philo Hard and Currence Hawley, Gideon was one of 15 children who descended from prominent lineage in Arlington, Vt. Although his maternal great uncle, Seth Warner, was a respected captain with the Green Mountain Boys during the American Revolution, his father's family were hardened Loyalists.

Attending Union College in Schenectady, Hard graduated in 1822 and immediately began the study of law. After his admittance to the bar in 1825 he traveled to Orleans County where he would establish himself as an attorney prior to moving his wife to the area the following year.

Although lost within our local history books, Gideon Hard should be regarded as one of our more notable founders. Hard became Orleans County treasurer in 1827 and was said to have motioned to change the name of the village from Newport to Albion.

It was in 1833 that Hard was elected to the United States House of Representa-



Submitted photo

FEDERAL STYLE: Jennie McGuire Leonard stands in front of her millinery on North Main Street in Albion in a vintage photo provided by Orleans County Historian Matt Ballard. Prior to serving as the millinery, the building was the law office of the Hon. Gideon Hard.

tive for the 23rd Congress running on the Anti-Masonic ticket and serving as the first representative from the newly established 33rd District. He was again elected to the 24th Congress, this time running on the Anti-Jackson ticket.

Hard's days as a politician were far from over and within five years of ending his career as a U.S. Representative, he was elected to the New York Senate, the last from the 1st District Class 3. After his term concluded in 1847 he was appointed to the position of canal appraiser in 1849 and later served as First Judge and Surrogate for Orleans

County.

The late 1850s proved difficult for the Hard family. Gideon suffered from personal illness, making his engagement in political and community affairs extremely difficult. Around 1861, Gideon's wife Adeline became gravely ill and suffered for nearly three years before she passed. Her illness and subsequent death caused great grief within the family and Gideon was destined to live out the remainder of his life with his children and later his sister before his own passing on April 27, 1885, at Albion.