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Tracing Albion banking history

OVERLOOKED ORLEANS: Banks fell prey to theft and closure over the decades as the town grew

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On Oct. 11, 1870, Ezra Titus Coan started his career as a private banker when he established "Coan's Bank" in Albion.

The establishment was fairly successful and in 1884 relocated to the Burrows Block to occupy the space previously inhabited by the First National Bank.

That institution collapsed earlier that year when Albert S. Warner absconded with the bank's assets. Of course, that is a different story for another time.

On Nov. 22, 1911, the bank reached \$1 million in deposits and remained in operation until the early 1930s when it closed.

The institution's assets were liquidated in 1937 and the building eventually sold to Arnold Pilon and Carl Rowe, and was converted to Dale's Supermarket.

Robert Coan, the nephew of E. Titus Coan, was active in the banking industry throughout Western New York. Before the

bank was reestablished as Citizens National Bank, he served as Orleans County Treasurer from 1891 to 1894, treasurer of the Albion Cold Storage Company, and was postmaster at Albion for several years around the turn of the century.

C. Royce Sawyer was also actively engaged in local civic organizations and banking interests.

He served as a director for both the Albion Cold Storage Company as well as Growers' Cold Storage at Waterport, and was a director of the Niagara Suspension Bridge Company. An active member of the local fire department, he was largely responsible for mechanizing the Albion Fire Department.

While returning from a convention of the Republican Party, Sawyer was involved in an automobile accident. Although shaken up, he only suffered minor injuries and returned home to rest. Roughly two weeks later, he suffered a serious heart attack while working at the bank. He never recovered and died afterward.