

Bethinking of Old Orleans

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SOME FACTS

What honorable group of men in Orleans County do you suppose has performed their duties with unbroken respectability representing all of us and whose positions have often been coveted for 153 years? YES - The Orleans County Board of Supervisors, since 1826.

Do you also know that until 1875 there were only nine supervisors in Orleans? From Landmarks of Orleans County 1894 we find the answer to this question.

"During several years the question of holding the town elections in Albion instead of Barre Center, (which was near the geographical center of the town of Barre) had been periodically agitated. This change was favored by the political party that was strongest in Albion, and was opposed by the party that was dominant in the town; and a majority could not be induced to vote for the change. In 1875 a majority of the Board of Supervisors were of the same political party as a majority in the village, and a proposition was made to divide the town. After a bitter contest this was carried and the new town was erected from the north part of Barre."

The "new" township that was created is Albion which thus gave us ten supervisors for greater representation. The first supervisor then elected from Albion was Norman S. Fields who served until 1877.

You might also think that the supervisors have always been men. However, there have been two women, each having been appointed to complete her late husband's unexpired term. They were Mrs. Ralph Beebe of Murray in 1947 and Mrs. Ole Orsland in Kendall in 1949.

The distinguished gentlemen in the photograph above are none other than the Board of Supervisors fifty-five years ago. They are as follows: Front - Arthur Rhodes, Murray; Boy Unknown; C. Prussia, Gaines; John Roche, Ridgeway; C. Harrington, Kendall. Back row - E. Benthin, Barre; William Karns, Albion; LeRoy Posson, Shelby; Harry Dean, Carlton; William McAllister, Clarendon; Fred Thompson, Clerk of the Board, Albion; K. Barry, Yates; J. Balcom, Murray, Melvin Luttenton, Messenger.

The position of messenger was done away with in the early 1940's.