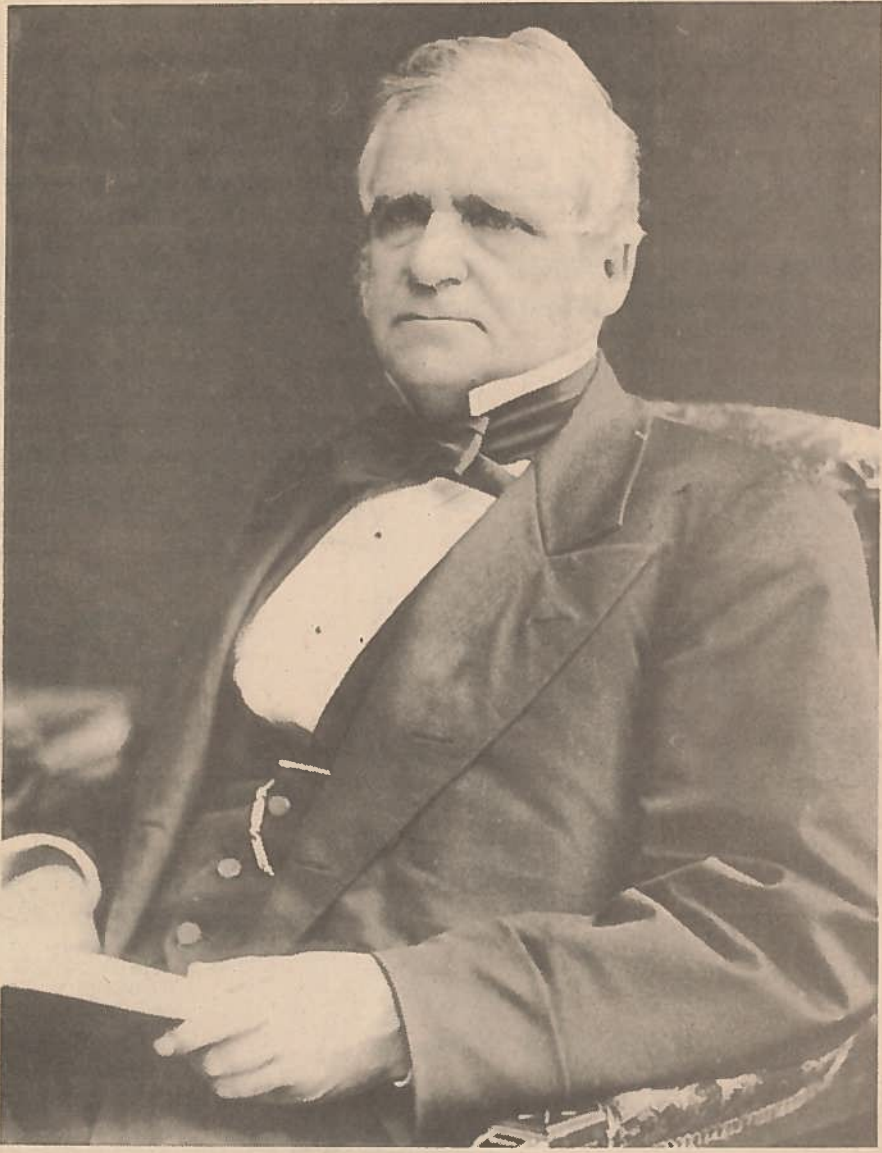


Bethinking of Old Orleans

C.W.Lattin County Historian



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Election Year

In this presidential election year of 1888 we might recall that an Orleans County man was once nominated for president. He was Sanford E. Church (1815-1880) of Albion and in 1868 was presented as a favorite son by the state delegation in the National Democratic Convention. As for his presidential aspirations, that is as far as he ever got.

Sanford E. Church moved to Albion at age 21 in 1836. Having taught several terms he became Deputy County Clerk and his political opportunities began. At age 25 upon completion of his law studies he was admitted to the bar. From 1846-1849 he was District Attorney and in 1850 and 1852 he was elected Lieutenant Governor. In 1867 he was elected Chief Justice of the Court of Appeals by a 90,000 majority, which position he held until his death.

We must remember that Orleans County was not officially established until Jan. 1, 1826 so the people of the county participated the first time in a national election in 1828. Surprisingly, Orleans County went Democratic that first election, casting 1564 votes for Andrew Jackson and 936 votes for the National Republican John Quincy Adams. The

county did not vote Democratic again until 1844 when they favored James K. Polk.

When the new Republican party entered its first candidate in 1856, its man, John C. Fremont won easily in this county as the Democrats were split by the American Party. In 1860 Republican Lincoln pulled in 3,859 votes to 2,246 for Stephen A. Douglas. Lincoln won again in 1864 of course. Horatio Seymour who was picked as the Democrat candidate over Sanford E. Church as mentioned above, lost to Republican U.S. Grant in 1868.

No Republican candidate ever lost in Orleans County until 1964 when Goldwater lost to L.B. Johnson 5,567 to 8,798. Not even the F.D. Roosevelt landslide of 1936 could loosen the GOP grip as this county joined the states of Maine and Vermont on the losing side that year.

As we approach the election of this year perhaps our election commissioners can be grateful that not so much is expected of them as of the commissioners of the very first election in this area. It is recorded that for the first election in April 1813, the commissioners had to walk from Jeddo to Barnegat (Shelby) to Ridgeway corners to Gaines to supervise the election. Oak Orchard creek was swollen with icy water so the commissioners had to remove their clothing and wade across.