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Bethinking of Old Orleans

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VOL. II PORTRAIT OF HON. SANFORD E. CHURCH

If you have ever been in the Grand Jury in the Court House at Albion, perhaps you have wondered who the distinguished gentleman is in the portrait above. It is an oil painting measuring 3' x 4'3" of Hon. Sanford E. Church 1815-1880, and is signed by the artist J. Roy Robertson 1871 in the upper right hand corner. Prominently hung it is fitting and right that Mr. Church's portrait occupy this place of honor. Although it has been one hundred years since his passing few people in Orleans County have excelled his esteem and prominence. The following resume of his career would indeed be hard to surpass.

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. In 1842 he was elected to the Assembly representing Orleans County. 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. In 1868 he was presented as a favorite son for the presidential nomination by the state delegation in the National Democratic Convention.

The residence of Sanford E. Church is presently the Merrill-Grinnell Funeral Home located on Ingersoll St. in Albion. He is buried in Mt. Albion Cemetery, the Church family lot being marked by a noteworthy baldachino (canopy) located near Glen Park. His great-great-grandson Sanford L. Church continues the family tradition of law practice.