

Bethinking of Old Orleans

Vol XXI

C.W. Lattin County Historian

No.51

12/24/99

JOHN B. BORDWELL 1863-1943

"He has declared to you, O man
What is good; and what doth
the Lord require of thee, but
to do justly, and to love mercy,
and to walk humbly with thy god?"

Micah 6:8

John Blodgett Bordwell born in Albion in 1863 became a life long resident and was identified with many interests within the community. His parents were Joseph and Althea (Blodgett) Bordwell. The father Joseph, a French Canadian, came to the United States in 1837 and first stayed in Brockport. He was a blacksmith by trade and for many years operated as a wagon maker on East Bank Street in Albion. John B. Bordwell was the youngest of four children. He became associated with the Medina Sandstone Industry in an administrative capacity. This was back at the time when there were close to fifty quarries throughout the county employing about 2,000 men annually. Mr. Bordwell owned considerable real estate including several business blocks in Albion. The most noteworthy one was known as the Bordwell Block which was built by his father in 1862-63 on East Bank Street. John Bordwell later sold this property to Renovation Lodge No. 97 of Free and Accepted Masons. For many years the J.J. Newberry store was located on the ground floor level of this business block.

Mr. Bordwell was a steadfast Republican and served for a number of years as clerk of a Senate Committee in Albion, headed by George F. Thompson of Middleport. This was during and after the administration of Governor Charles Whitman.

In his obituary it states: "In 1918, in spite of the fact that he was 55 years of age, he over came objections on that score and was an appointment as a Knights of Columbus secretary and served in that capacity with the Army overseas. After the war ended he traveled in Europe considerably.

In 1894 Mr. Bordwell is listed among the ranks of the Masonic Fraternity. He was the organist for Renovation Lodge, the organist for the Orleans Chapter of Royal Arch Masons No. 175 and also associated with the Alpha and Omega Council No. 71.



Sometime prior to 1900 however, he married a Roman Catholic and at that point embraced Catholicism. He became a charter member of the local Knights of Columbus and served as secretary for several years. In 1920 Mr. Bordwell gave a beautiful stained glass window for the St. Joseph's Cemetery Chapel in Albion. The window depicts the Resurrection.

He was a charter member of the Albion Lodge of Elks serving as an Exalted Ruler and also a District Deputy for Western New York. Mr. Bordwell was an active member of Sheret Post in Albion. He spent his winters in Florida and very much enjoyed cooking as a hobby. He died in 1943 having been pre-deceased by his wife many years before. A Requiem High Mass was celebrated at his funeral and he was laid to rest in St. Joseph's Cemetery.