



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

# Albion Academy

**BY C. W. LATTIN**  
Orleans County Historian

**W**ith work commencing this past week on the old Albion Grammar School, which means its preservation, it seems logical to look back at the beginnings. Our lithograph from the 1850s shows the original Academy building which was located on the old Grammar School site.

This original building, located between East and West Academy Streets, faced south fronting West State Street. This school for secondary education was incorporated by an act of the state legislature May 1, 1837.

The first classes in February 1838 were conducted by Edwinolds, the first teacher, in a room in the basement of the old Baptist Meeting House on Main Street.

The Academy building shown in our lithograph was constructed in 1839 and opened for use that fall. Subjects offered were geography, history of the United States, natural history, geology, algebra, trigonometry, surveying, chemistry, philosophy, English grammar, rhetoric, logic, astronomy, Latin, Greek and French.

The academies were private schools for essentially grades 9 to 12 by tuition. The common or district schools for grades 1 to 8 were free as supported by assessment through taxation.

In the mid-19th century when the state established normal schools, this had an adverse effect on academies which had no help from public funds. The Albion Academy ran through the spring term of 1876. It was then given up and the grounds and building were deeded over to the newly established Albion Union Free School in April 1878. The old Academy building was then remodeled and in the 1880s an addition put on.

The Union Free School faced East Academy Street and in 1906 was torn down and the present gray Medina sandstone building was erected for a high school.

By the early 1930s it was evident that a new, more modern high school was needed when the property was acquired on East Avenue. The sandstone building on East Academy became the grammar school in 1934 and was last used by the district for offices when sold to private interests around 25 years ago.