

DR. O. NICHOSON

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Orleans County Historian

In the early days, a pioneer doctor might be seen making his way on horseback over miles of muddy roads or even cow paths to a home where the entire family was down with ague and fever.

His saddlebags were full of blue pills, quinine and calomel. He knew these were no wonder drugs, and that his own short-comings having perhaps learned his profession, not in a medical college, but from two or three years in the office of a practicing physician "back East."

If he wasn't called on to relieve ague and fever, it was dysentery, influenza, typhoid, pneumonia or consumption (tuberculosis). All were killers. But the "good physician" was as hardy as the farmer,



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as self-sacrificing as the pioneer preacher and as dedicated to the relief of suffering and death as his predecessors in the noble profession of medicine.

One of the first pioneer doctors in Orleans County was Dr. Orson Nicholson.

From "Pioneer History of Orleans County" we find: "Dr. Orson Nicholson was born in Galway, Saratoga County, New York, March 2,

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1795. He was educated as a physician.

"In the year 1822 he removed to the Village of Albion, which was then beginning to be settled. He entered ardently into every undertaking of a public character connected with the organization of the County of Orleans and the civil and social institutions which such an organization occasioned.

"He was elected the first County Clerk of Orleans County and by a re-election to a second term, held that office six years.

"In August 1819, he settled about two miles south of Albion. In 1822 he moved to Albion and there, for many years, had a large practice as a physician.

"His health failing, he went into business with Dr. L.C. Paine and dealt in drugs, medicines and books until a few years before his death.

"He was the first regular physician who settled in Barre. He was also the first physician who settled in Albion.

"Dr. Nicholson married Lucy Morris in the year 1820. They had three children: Adeline E., Caroline A., and Helen J.

"Adeline E. married Jonathan S. Stewart, and Helen J. married Charles A. Stanton. She died May 12, 1862. Mrs. Lucy Nicholson died October 8, 1864. Dr. Orson Nicholson died May 7, 1870."