

# Bethinking of Old Orleans

C.W.Lattin • County Historian

## Circa 1930 Portrait Of Charles Signor

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### JUDGE CHARLES G. SIGNOR 1880-1960

"The true rule, in determining to embrace or reject anything, is not whether it have any evil in it, but whether it have more evil than of good. There are few things wholly evil or wholly good. Almost everything, especially of government policy, is an inseparable compound of the two, so that our best judgment of the preponderance between them is continually demanded."

—A. Lincoln

Charles Grierson Signor was born in Albion, N.Y. on Oct. 28, 1880, the son of Judge Isaac S. Signor and Dolly Grierson Signor. His two siblings were Mrs. Francis H. Blake, Sr. and Mrs. Lynn M. Burrows. Their father once served as District Attorney and was County Judge from 1883-1894 and from 1905 to 1911. Charles Signor attended the local schools and received the degree of Bachelor of Arts at Hamilton College in 1902 and a Master of Arts degree in 1905. He attended the Buffalo Law School and was admitted to the New York Bar in 1905. In that same year he became managing clerk for the firm of Bushnell and Metcalf of Buffalo. In 1905 he became associated with his father and a member of the firm of Signor and Signor located in Albion. From 1907 to 1909 he was a member of the Hill, Signor and Signor law firm in Buffalo and was later associated with Griggs, Baldwin and Baldwin in New York City. He was also admitted to the Bar in New Jersey in 1910 as an attorney and later as counselor in 1911. In 1914 he rejoined the firm of Signor and Signor in Albion which in 1931 became known as Signor, Reed & Signor, when Herbert T. Reed became a member of the partnership.

From 1943 to 1950 Charles Signor served as Orleans County Judge and Surrogate, and Judge of the Children's Court of Orleans County. He was for many years active in the Republican Party and served as a member of the GOP Committee from Orleans County. For over thirty years he was one of the county's delegates to the Eighth District Judicial Republican Convention. When Judge Signor retired from the County Judgeship in 1950 he was succeeded by Judge Francis A. Sturgis. Throughout his career as a practicing attorney he was considered to be one of the most brilliant lawyers in Western New York. His research was always most thorough and competent with his knowledge of the law being extraordinary.

Judge Signor was long active in the affairs of his community. He was one of the founders and charter members of the Albion Rotary Club and served as its second president in 1923-24. He was a member of the Albion Town Club, Elks Lodge, Albion Chamber of Commerce and a life member of



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Renovation Lodge F&AM. For many years he was a director of the Swan Library Board. He also served on the board of directors of Growers Cold Storage at Waterport and at one time was vice-president of the Niagara Falls International Bridge Co.

He was a member of the Psi Upsilon fraternity and Pi Delta, a legal fraternity. Judge Signor was a member of the Orleans County and New York State Bar Associations, once serving as President of the County Association.

He was an attorney for the Marine Trust Company of Webster, N.Y. and at one time attorney for the Northwestern New York Water Authority.

Judge Signor married Alice Margaret Morrissey in June 1911 at Ridgewood, New Jersey. In 1914 they built a Colonial Revival Style residence on South Main Street in Albion where they both resided the rest of their lives. The Signors had two daughters, Mrs. Barbara Signor Moore and the late Miss Suzanne Signor.