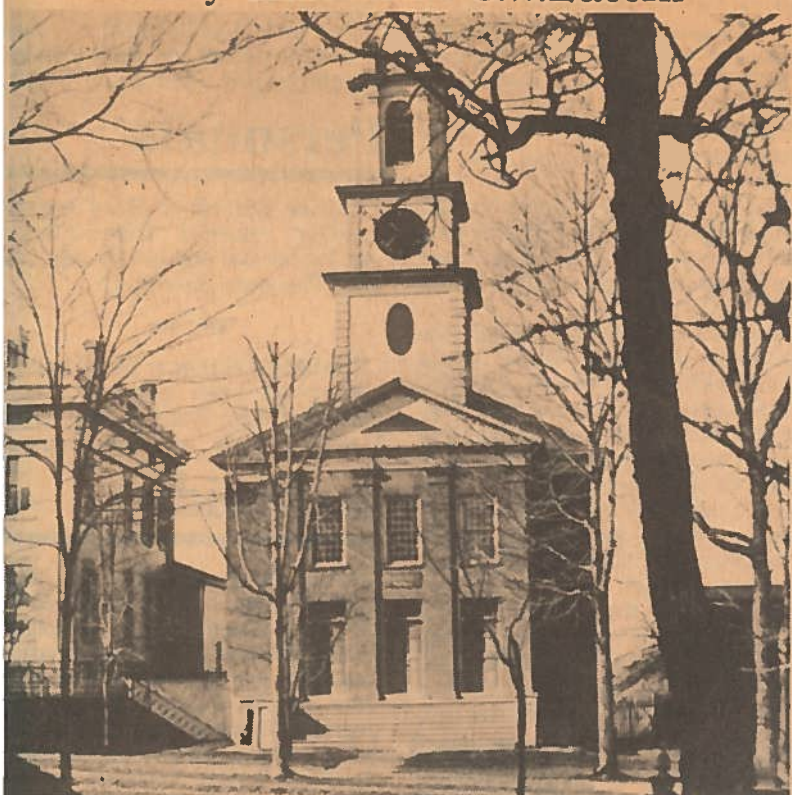


Bethinking of 4-23-86 Old Orleans

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Architecture Destroyed

First Baptist Church Of Albion 1832-c. 1892

Following the building of crude log cabins by the early settlers in Orleans County the Federal Style of architecture was the first to emerge with recognizable characteristics. This particular style can actually be tracked back to the 1780's. However, since the very first settlers did not arrive in Orleans County until 1803, we know that no such structures existed in this style here until much later. Therefore, it is safe to conclude that the Federal Style was used in Orleans County from roughly 1815 up to about 1840. The historic Ridge Road was improved by State funds first in 1814 and, of course, the Erie Canal was completed in 1825. These two thoroughfares, particularly the second, can be credited for leading to the development of the area. In other words, there just wasn't much here until the second quarter of the 19th Century. But with that second quarter of the last century came about one of the most refined and dignified architectural styles to be used in Orleans County.

The Federal Style was the first truly American style and gained popularity, in particular, through a builder's manual by Asher Benjamin entitled "The American Builders Companion" which was first published in 1806. The style "Federal" was indeed reflective of the new republic and took its name from the Federalist Party.

The characteristics of the style are: balance and symmetry in design; lightness, elegance and delicacy in mass; and extreme finesse in execution. The overall mood of this style suggests quality in life, dignity and refinement. Federal structures typically have very low-pitched roofs, delicate pilasters, columns and fine detailed cornice work. Fan-shaped tops for windows and door openings as well as elliptical attic windows are sometimes featured. Clapboard or smooth matched board, locally fired brick, field cobblestone, and quarried stone were the typical building materials used.

One of the most superb examples of the Federal Style was the First Baptist Church of Albion. This edifice was located on North Main Street adjacent to what is now the Swan Library. In fact, part of the library shows in this late 19th Century photo when it was the home of Roswell Burrows.

The Baptist Society in Albion was organized in April 1830. Their first meeting house which is shown here was completed and dedicated in 1832. By 1858, due to growing membership, the church building became over-crowded and it was decided to build a larger structure on a new lot at Liberty and West Park Streets. The old Baptist meeting house then became the Burrows Concert Hall. By the 1890's this beautiful classic structure no longer served any purpose and was demolished. The site then was simply a vacant lot until 1907 when the Independent Order of Odd Fellows Lodge built their temple on the location.