

## [Church Family]

### Woman Says

By M.C.F.

Benjamin Franklin Church, who was born in Nunda in 1833, died at Woodstock, Ill., 75 years ago last month. He had gone to Illinois with his father's family about 1851 and settled on a farm near Woodstock. He was married there in 1854 to Miss Sarah Dibble.

Mr. Church held many important positions. He was elected sheriff of his county in 1862. For 18 years, he was chief clerk of the U.S. Railway Mail Service and was in charge of the postal mail car at the great Centennial exposition in Philadelphia in 1876. He was highly esteemed in Woodstock, where he was regarded as a man of unswerving integrity.

His older brother, Col. Lawrence Church, who died 14 years earlier, was an equally prominent citizen of Woodstock, and his funeral had to be held in the public park there, as there was no building large enough to hold the gathering.

The Churches were a pioneer family who lived here more than 40 years, Capt. Richard Church settling on what was long known as the Angier farm on the Angier road which turns off the Picket Line just west of the village.

B.F. Church's brothers and sisters were Leonard, Lawrence, Richard jr., Jane, who married William E. Manley, D.D., and Chloe, who married Walter D. Chandler. The latter, who lived to the age of 82, was the only member of the family who remained here, and her descendants are the only descendants of the Church family in this region, so far as we know.

Pioneer Universalists, the Churches were charter members of the Nunda Universalist church. Leonard, who married Betsey Grover, member of another prominent Universalist family, became a licensed clergyman.

When the first church building was dedicated Jan. 19, 1842, Jane's future husband, Dr. Manley, gave the sermon and she composed a dedicatory hymn for the occasion. Soon after his pastorate here—and probably soon after his marriage to Jane Church—Dr. Manly established St. Paul's Universalist church in Chicago and for many years published a well-known church periodical.

The older Church boys were members of the Young Men's Literary society, a prominent organization which existed here for about five years, beginning in 1840. In fact, it appears that they all were identified with many facets of early life here as well as with affairs in other places, wherever they went.

That there is no more information about them than this can be explained only by the fact that they lived in Nunda during a period when very little was written, when there were no newspapers. Yet they lived here 40 years or more and were one of Nunda's most prominent early families.

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