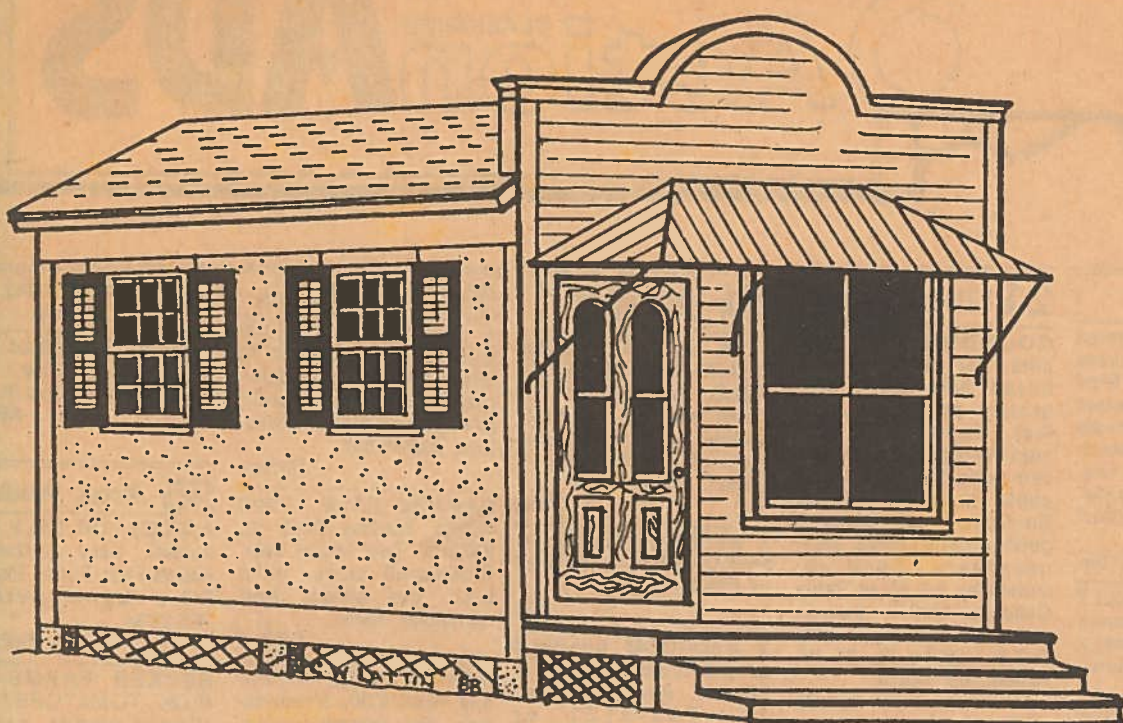


Bethinking of Old Orleans

C.W.Lattin County Historian



Vol. X 9-8-88 No. 36 A Sense Of History

(The following interview with Henry Ford 1863-1947 appeared in the Hearst papers for April 27 and 28, 1938:)

When I was a young man, I, like so many others, was bewildered. I found myself asking the question...“What are we here for?” I found no answer. Without some answer to that question life is empty, useless. Then one day a friend handed me a book...That little book gave me the answer I was seeking. It changed my whole life. From emptiness and uselessness, it changed my outlook upon life to purpose and meaning. I believe that we are here now and will come back again...Of this I am sure...that we are here for a purpose. And that we go on. Mind and memory—they are the eternal.

(Another interview with Ford is reported by George Sylvester Viereck:)

I adopted the theory of Reincarnation when I was twenty-six...Religion offered nothing to the point...Even work could not give me complete satisfaction. Work is futile if we cannot utilize the experience we collect in one life to the next. When I discovered Reincarnation it was as if I had found a universal plan. I realized that there was a chance to work out my ideas. Time was no longer limited. I was no longer a slave to the hands of the clock...Genius is experience. Some seem to think that it is a gift or talent, but it is the fruit of long experience in many lives. Some are older souls than others, so they know more...

The discovery of Reincarnation put my mind at ease...If you preserve a record of this conversation, write it so that it puts men's minds at ease. I would like to communicate to others the calmness that the long view of life gives to us.

The above is from **Reincarnation: The Phoenix Fire Mystery** compiled and edited by Joseph Head and S.L. Cranston.

Henry Ford certainly had an affinity for the past through “the long view life gives to us” as he put it. His interest in the past caused him to assemble one of the most outstanding museums of America in the United States at Dearborn, Michigan. He found reverence in the common, the ordinary, everyday objects and artifacts representing skills of the past incarnations. He saw the value of a museum of antiquities. It touches the soul!

What are we here for? Without a sense of the past it is often difficult to give this question any kind of answer. A sense of the past gives us a sense of belonging, a point of reference and history museums are a good point for understanding past lives. We are here for a purpose and museums give meaning to that purpose.

Locally we have the Cobblestone Museum Complex which endeavors to relate experience of the past through various buildings and artifacts. On Sunday, September 11 from 1-5 the Annual Old Timers Fair will be taking place, thereby recreating before your eyes many old time skills such as quilting, tating, basketry, blacksmithing, saw sharpening, spinning, weaving, printing, stenciling and much more. Come and see how Henry Ford put it, that “Genius is experience.”

The illustration above depicts that newest building at the Cobblestone Complex. It was given to the museum last year by Rose Welles and has now been completely restored. Last week the artifacts of the Peters Harness Shop formerly of Lyndonville and Albion, were moved into place. This little building will be open to the public for the first time at the Old Timers Fair. It will be formally dedicated next season as the P.H. Peters Harness Shop.

At 4 p.m. on Sunday a ceremony to unveil a sign for Proctor Brook will take place at the Cobblestone Museum near the Peters Harness Shop. You are cordially invited to attend all the Old Timers Day festivities which we hope will give purpose and meaning to you as part of Community Heritage Year in New York.