

Bethinking of Old Orleans

C.W. Lattin County Historian

VOL. XIV

10-2-92

No. 39

CANTALOUPE ANYONE?



This curious photo, made from a glass plate negative, was probably taken in the late 1890's. It is unusual for a couple of reasons. First, it is an error picture which appears to have been done in natural light under a time exposure. We note a man's hand is blurred because he moved. This error couple are seated around a dining table with place settings for four. Plunked between them, traps on a small stand, is a very large birdcage in a parrot setting on the perch.

The table is set with plates, silverware and large glass mugs probably filled with water. Perhaps it's the water pitcher standing there. A silver dispenser (spoon holder) of some sort holds spoons and there is a large silver-plated sugar bowl. In the center of the table there appears to be a platter

slice on each plate. Even the gentleman is holding a piece. The background displays unframed oil paintings. This suggests to me that perhaps the lady who is pictured, might have been a "Sunday Painter." Let me clarify — a Sunday painter is one who dabbles at art only, and does not make it a profession. "Sunday Painter" is applied to the person who does something else for a living during the week but paints on sundays. At any rate, who ever did these paintings probably copied some picture out of a magazine as the scenes do not appear to be local. However, I'm under the impression the photo is local as I found it with about twelve other negatives of local scenes which can be identified between Millville and Knowlesville. Truly, this is a rare piece of rural