

# Bethinking of Old Orleans

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## LOREN HARRIS & GINGER



These photos and human interest story comes to us from Mr. George Kennedy of Medina. We see in the upper picture, Mr. Loren Harris 1868-1940, driving an open buggy pulled by his beloved horse Ginger. Kneeling behind the right rear wheel is Gene DiPalma. This snapshot was taken in front of DiPalma's Service Station at Fancher, N.Y. in 1939. In the background are box cars standing along a siding at the Fancher R.R. Station.

Mr. Kennedy, the grandson of Loren Harris, indicates that his grandfather was much opposed to automobiles and preferred to keep his horse and buggy for traveling purposes. He was perhaps, the last person around these parts to rely solely on the horse and buggy for transportation and never had a driver's license.

In the winter he sometimes drove a cutter when there was enough snow on the roads. Ginger is shown below, chained to a stake, for grazing. Her left rear flank displayed a Z-Z brand. It seems she was purchased by Mr. Harris when about a year old and had come from Idaho. Merton Harris, Loren's son, trained the horse to pull the buggy and farm equipment. She also served as a riding horse and eventually became tame enough for a rider to shoot a gun from her back.

Loren Harris and his wife, Bertha Williams Harris, lived on a 14-acre farm at the northwest corner of the Holley Road and Transit Road in the Town of Albion. The house and buildings are now all gone.

Mr. Harris was a blacksmith and operated a small business from these premises as well as making a meager living off his farm. He always raised one pig a year for their own use and complained bitterly when he had to pay 6¢ for a large bolt one year to hold a tri-pod together for supporting the pig's carcass at butchering time.

During the winter he often worked for a farmer at Riches Corners trimming trees at 20¢ an hour. I suppose 6¢ for a bolt did seem like a lot to him. Mrs. Harris often walked the mile from their house to the community center in Riches Corners for frequent quilting bees. This was about her only entertainment as she was otherwise a "homebody." Mr. Harris did enjoy the home-brewed spirits of apple cider and would buy this elixir from families on Washington Street in Albion for 10¢ a milk bottle full. He often went to the neighbors to listen to the radio as he enjoyed the prize fights which were broadcast back in those days.

This is a simple story about average people and a simpler way of life as it was sixty years ago. Indeed, there were many people like Loren and Bertha Harris who raised a family off a small farm and eked out a living for themselves. They didn't expect the world owed them anything except what they worked for and they were completely happy with life in simplistic terms. They, like so many others, were the heart throb of America.