

Bethinking of Old Orleans

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MEDINA'S BANCROFT HOUSE

In the early days of Medina when the forest trees were removed and streets laid out, the active center of business was located near the canal at Main and Pearl streets. A building known as the "Arcade" was erected there which had a boat landing and sold groceries. The principal entertainment hall of the village was also located in the "Arcade". After a fire the "Arcade" was rebuilt and occupied as a bank until failure in 1866. J.A. Johnson of Yates then came into possession of the property remodeling it into what became known as the Johnson House. In 1873, H. N. Bancroft purchased the Johnson House, changed the name to Bancroft House and improved it by erecting a tower over six stories high. At that time George H. Shattuck promoted the idea of a town clock for the tower. He secured pledged from businessmen in the amount of \$1,500 of which \$1,000 was paid to an Albany clock manufacturer. The other \$500 was spent for an illuminated dial which was imported from Paris, France. This worked successfully until through carelessness, the illuminated dials were ruined by the gas jets. The clock was afterwards lost to the public by the foreclosure of a mortgage on the Bancroft property. It was eventually sold and after numerous changes of management it was purchased by A. H. White who changed its name to the White Hotel.

The photograph above was taken in 1909 showing the Bar Room under the management of A. H. White with the Boddy brothers as bartenders. After the enactment of the Volstead Act the upper three stories were removed in 1923. The inset drawing shows the Bancroft House as it appeared in its hey day complete with tower and illuminated clock.

