

Bethinking of Old Orleans

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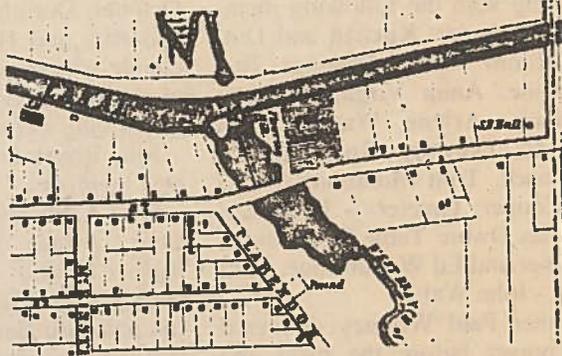
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TWO YOUNG GENTLEMEN SEE GHOST

The story you are about to read is taken from an old 1923 newspaper clipping of reminiscences. I believe this is something which might have occurred in the 1860's.

"Now, there have always been attractive young ladies on East State Street as well as elsewhere, although at the time of which I speak, the street ended at Brown Street or what we used to call in those days "Hall's Bridge", and please remember that Albion's old burying ground (before Mt. Albion Cemetery was incorporated) was on the vacant lot just east of the stone mill. Now then, two young gentlemen had been calling on two young ladies in that locality, one summer evening, and having been pleasantly entertained, as usual, they had prolonged their stay until the maximum hour in those days -- twelve o'clock at night. It somehow happened, in the course of the evening, that the subject of haunted houses and ghosts had unfortunately crept into their conversation and as everybody had a story to tell in those days, ghost stories went the round of the company until the girls got fridgety and creepy and told the boys to go home, crawl into bed and cover their heads with blankets. The boys had said their "good-night" and while one of them lingered at the door the other started on his way home thinking that his companion would soon over-take him. It was the midnight hour, the moon had gone down, the stars gave but feeble light, the houses were dark, and all objects were in shadow. The young man had walked slowly thinking that his companion would overtake him. Then he stopped a moment to listen for the sound of his feet on the old defective board walks. As he did so he knew he was opposite the burying ground for he could just distinguish the long orderly rows of the marble slabs. Then -- his hair stood on end, and his heart almost stopped beating: with a mighty effort he broke into a run which never ceased until he found himself out of breath and panting against the Octagon Candy Store at the corner of East State and Clarendon Street and where the street lamp was still burning. A moment later he heard his companion running as though his life depended on his speed and soon he too, was gasping for breath against the lamp-post and the following conversation ensued: "Why didn't you wait for me?" "I have waited for you here." "Well! I guess it was because you couldn't go any further for you're puffing like a walrus,



what was your tremendous hurry to get here?" "I don't think you lost much time yourself since you started and you are pretty short of wind yourself." A moment's respite. "Say! honestly, what made you run away?" "For the same reason that made you run after me." "You saw something?" "Yes, did you?" "Yes" "Confound those fool stories! Hadn't we better go back and investigate?" "What do you say?" "I'm satisfied to wait till morning for I would not go back tonight for \$50." "Neither would I." "Tell me just what you saw." "I will, and believe me it was no imagination, not no dream. I had stopped for a second to listen if I could hear your footsteps, and as I turned, I saw that I was passing the old burying ground, for I could see the forms of the tomb-stones, and then in a second's time I saw something white lying on one of the graves; then I saw it move and that was enough for me." "Now what did you see." "Well, as I was passing the burying ground, I called your name several times for I thought you might have crawled over the stone to jump out at me, and then I saw something in white; saw it rise from the ground and start to come toward me." Investigation proved that a neighbor's white cow had taken advantage of a dilapidated fence and has spent the night in the graveyard."

The illustration from the Niagara Orleans County Map of 1860 shows the Flour Mill and Old Cemetery which were located just east of the west branch of Sandy Creek on East State Street.

While ghost stories are entertaining to hear and to tell, let us remember that logic and reason, if employed, along with a little investigation, can usually rule out the fertile imagination.