

# Rethinking Of Old Orleans

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C.W. Lattin, County Historian

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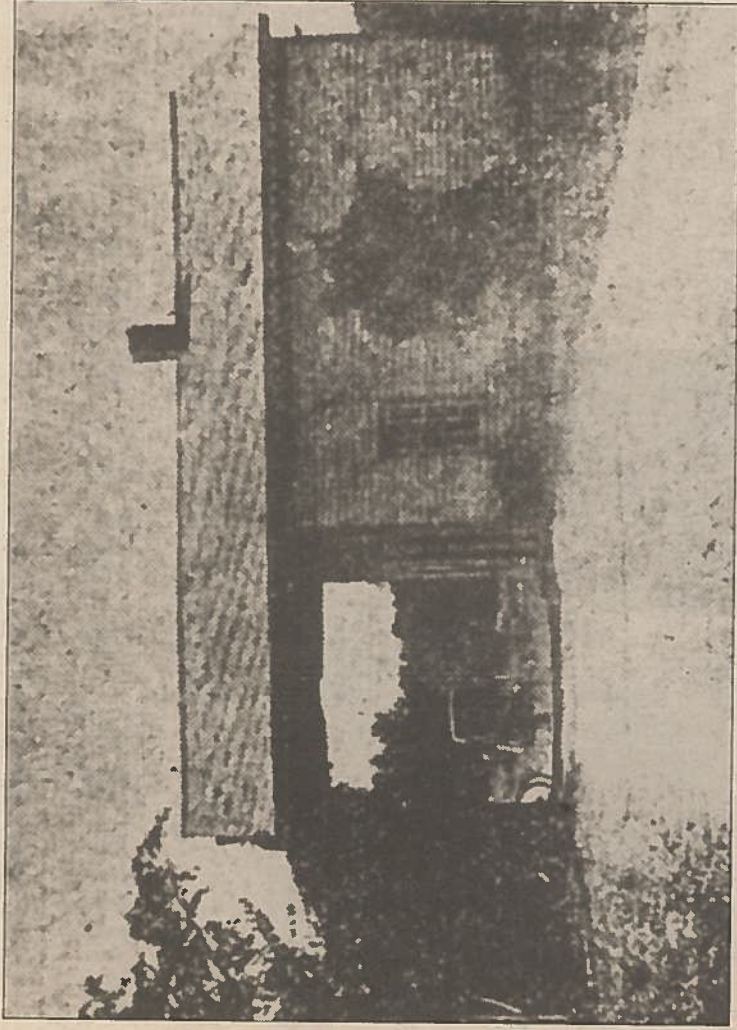
## Shelby Toll House

The 1852, 1860 and 1875 Orleans County maps all show a toll house or toll gate located between Medina and Shelby Center. It was however, located much closer to Medina than Shelby Center and was situated on the west side of the road. I judge from our picture of it here that we are looking south. The 1852 map illustrates the highway between these two places as having been made of plank. Since it was an improved road explains the necessity of the toll gate which was there until 1898. There was a similar plank road and toll house between the village of Albion and the hamlet of Gaines.

In 1931, a Burley Barnes Ayers wrote an interesting account reminiscing about his youth which dated back sixty years at the time. It is in part as follows:

"Your illustrations of the old toll gate a mile south of Medina, appearing recently, brought back old memories. I spent a summer vacation there in 1871 helping take tolls. It was great fun and I became a great favorite with travelers. Was 12 years old. I invented a system of carrying pennies in my pocket to make change so they did not have to stop. Became well acquainted with the regular patrons. A line of grain wagons painted blue

and called the 'Blue Line' was run between Shelby (known then as Barnegat) and Medina, of which Mr. Harmon was proprietor. He drove a handsome buggy and made daily trips. His opposite was Mr. Bradwell, another grain buyer, who drove a dilapidated buggy. Another famous traveler was Mr. Schemerhorn, who owned a big strawpaper mill at Barnegat. Another famous patron was Volney Acre, who drove a fine double rig with the handsomest family of children I ever saw. He was my ideal of an elegant country gentleman, and was very kind to me, so that when I visit Boxwood I doff my hat to his grave. Mr. Sumner lived at the top of the hill and was another fine gentleman farmer. His hired man was a swell guy who used to take Saturday night off to drive to Medina, and stopped at the Gate to buy a 5-cent cigar. He was my ideal of a real sport. Mr. Baker's farm was next door to the toll gate. He was another fine gentlemen farmer and his boys — Ed, Charley and Jimmy, were my pals. Just under the hill the Oak Orchard creek swelled out into a pond that supplied the mill race that ran through Medina. I had a boat that was borrowed by Don C. Bent, Alfred Dawson and others from the village and they figured with me as the mightiest of hunters.



The pond was loaded with bullfrogs whose nightly chorus was magnificent. My uncle, Ira Barnes, kept the toll gate that year. He was taken ill the following spring and died in the arms of Mr. Goodman and Mr. Dawson, of the Masonic Lodge. Bob Searle and Will Prudden were other next door kids and pals.

Bob's father was the one ice house owner. Of the whole lot of Medina boys, Bob and I are still associated together in the West."

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**Notice**

A tour of Millville Cemetery will take place at 7 p.m. Thursday, July 13.