



# Bethinking of Old Orleans

Vol. XXIV

By C.W. Lattin, Orleans County Historian

No. 17

4-26-02

## A mystery building fades into memory

Our photo from the 1905 Souvenir Booklet of Albion shows a magnificent industrial building once located at the south end of Liberty Street by the railroad.

This four-story brick structure with sandstone trimmings was erected in the 1880s by E. K. Hart. At the time it was being built, my great-grandfather asked Mr. Hart, "What are you building it for?" Hart's answer was, "If anybody asks you, tell them you don't know."

For many years the building was occupied by F. A. Reed Inc., which sold fruit growing supplies. This would have included paper packing goods, excelsior, baskets, etc. More recently the building was used by the Driesel Lumber Co.

Within the past two or three weeks, what

remained of the building behind the Jubilee store was torn down. I should point out, however, that this structure had been truncated a number of years ago, leaving just the first floor.

My father, who graduated from high school in 1917, said this is where they played basketball before there was a gymnasium. Evidently the second floor was rented out to the school for such purposes when the old high school was in use on East Academy Street.

Over the years there were various occupants, but its original intent is still a mystery to me. If nothing more, it certainly showed E. K. Hart's presence, a visual statement giving importance to Albion as one rode through on the railroad.