



Bethinking of Old Orleans

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West Shelby

This scene at West Shelby shows a group of men and boys on the front porch of the West Shelby Country Store around 1890. The country store was certainly a place for men to "hang out" back then. The store not only served as a mercantile business but also as a center for catching up on the latest news. Not at all unlike our modern day coffee shops.

There is, however, a woman in the picture. She is seated behind the fence at the farm house next to the store. After all, it would not have been proper for a woman to be hanging out at the corner store.

Before 1810 there was nothing at West Shelby except idle wilderness. But in that year Joshua Park made the first purchase of land. In the fall David Demara built a log cabin. His nearest neighbor was two miles away. In 1811 Joshua and Samuel Carpenter and Sam Bellinger arrived and in 1819 David, Jacob and Thomas Wetherwax came and settled. In fact, before this little hamlet was West Shelby, it

went by the name of Wetherwax Corners.

At one time this community supported two churches, both of which are now long gone. The Christian Church of West Shelby located on West Shelby Road was housed in a brick structure erected in 1869, later used as a store. The Methodist Church just south of the community on Salt Works Road was moved in 1875 to a lot just north of the corners, but was torn down around 1941 after the congregation disbanded.

Along with the country store pictured here, this hamlet also supported a blacksmith shop. At the southwest corner of the hamlet is an old cemetery where lie the remains of several early pioneers including David Demara, a veteran of the Revolution. To the north of West Shelby lies Mt. Pleasant Cemetery, still an active cemetery which suggests this little hamlet had its scores of prominent people over the course of time.