



Bethinking of Old Orleans

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"As It Used To Be"

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Today's photo, a shot of the Sammit's clothing store for men in Albion, probably was taken during the second decade of the 20th century.

The 1911 Orleans County Directory lists Oscar Sammit as selling clothing and furnishings at 76 North Main St. This store was located on the left side of the Pratt Opera House block next to Beaver Alley.

Oscar Sammit is the gray-haired man behind the counter. A little farther back is Maurice Swartz, a sales clerk. In the rear of the store, we see another sales clerk showing a patron a suit of clothes.

The photo is a classic one-point perspective.

The store was long and narrow and lined on each side with beautiful mahogany cases for all kinds of men's clothing.

Little drawers for handkerchiefs, medium doors for caps and big cases for hats and suits. A place for everything and everything in its place. You did not go in and help yourself!

There were built-in mirrors in a group of three on angles so you could better see yourself in your new suit. Note at the left edge of the photo a mirror which reflects cases of caps.

Luggage also was sold; it appears on top of the large hat rack cases.

All goods were kept under glass, where they were dust-free.

If you wanted to buy a suit, the clerk would open the large doors on a track and pull out a rack of suits from which to make a selection. If you bought a suit, they threw in a necktie, which we see neatly folded on shelves in the counter in front of Oscar Sammit.

I remember Sammit's as a kid. It was a high-tone store even then. Oscar Sammit was, of course, long gone, but the name remained until Landauers bought it out more than 30 years ago.

Unfortunately, like many small businesses, they, too, closed more than 20 years ago.