



Bethinking of Old Orleans

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By C.W. Lattin, Orleans County Historian

Dreamland

Our picture this week is taken from a photographic post card, which was no doubt produced at a local studio. It shows the very first movie theater ever opened in Albion called the Dreamland.

The archives indicate that this was in 1907. It was located on the north side of East Bank Street, a couple of buildings west of the village hall.

When the Dreamland opened, a storefront was converted into a very small movie house. It consisted of a very long narrow viewing space for the patrons inside.

The exterior was dressed up with this arched opening replacing a door and display window.

In later years, during the 1950s, Earl Walters had a men's apparel shop in this location with Holliday Jewelers in the other side of this brick building.

Note in the picture, the two doors in the recess either side

of the ticket window with bare light bulbs in the arch above. Movie posters indicate from left to right the films which are playing, "Land of Cactus", "Beneath the Veil", Powers Picture Plays "The Little Thief", and "The Indian Rustler." All four posters were, of course, advertising silent pictures. The homemade poster to the far right indicates "Big Show Matinee 2PM. We are running two machines, No Waits."

When the Bijou Dream, Albion's second movie house, opened in 1908 at the Odd Fellows building, the price of admission was 5 cents. I assume the prices at the Dreamland were in line with that.

The next movie house in Albion, known as the Family Theatre, opened in the "teen's" in a store front at the Masonic building on the south side of East Bank Street. This was larger and more comfortable and rendered the earlier theaters quickly out of business.