

Onderdonk & Reed

Today's photos, both from 1905, show the store owned by Mrs. H.B. Onderdonk and Burton B. Reed as it looked 100 years ago. The building still remains on North Main Street in Albion, across from the Albion Visitor's Center.

Signage in the old photo states: "Onderdonk & Reed Furniture and Undertaking." In the 1905 Souvenir Book of Albion, a full page ad indicates some of the things being sold: "Crockery, Wall Paper, Window Shades, Picture Frames, Lamps, Holiday Novelties and Five and Ten Cent Goods." The center display windows show off various rolls of wallpaper on display while the left hand window shows off crockery.

The interior picture shows a host of goods displayed in the store. Here we see tables, plant stands with jardinières, foot stools, lamp stands, writing desk, occasional chairs, rocking chairs, buffet, dressers, vanity table, china cabinet, bookcase and bureau.

The shelves in the back of the photo are lined with close to two dozen parlor lamps. These are the lamps with ball or spherical shades that have been called "Gone With the Wind Lamps." This description came to these parlor lamps after people saw them in

the 1939 movie "Gone With the Wind." However, when they were popular during the 1880s, 1890s and in the first decade of the 20th century, they were simply known as parlor lamps.

In fact, it was incorrect to have used them in the movie as that gives a false impression of home interiors during the Civil War period. They just didn't have this style of lamp at that time.

One hundred years ago, when parlor lamps popular, many were selling in the \$5 price range. Now antiques, one with its original shade could fetch \$300 or more.

Henry B. Onderdonk established the combination furniture and undertaking business at the beginning of the fourth quarter of the 19th century. He died in 1894, and his wife Ella carried on the store with Burton Reed as a partner for a number of years. However, they appear to have been out of business by 1915 although the 1916 directory still lists them.

I recently purchased a tall crockery flower vase with the store label still on the bottom indicating "Onderdonk and Reed, Albion, NY." Imagine my surprise to find this fragile par-ticle of history still intact.

