



## Ralph R. Brown residence

Recently the Brown family at Brown's Berry Patch in Carlton celebrated 200 years of farming in Orleans County. Seven generations have carried on the family tradition on the same land, which was taken up from the Holland Land Company in 1804.

Today's photo, taken in the late 1870s or 1880s, shows the Brown residence on the east side of Oak Orchard River Road near Route 18. The 1869 and 1887 Orleans County Directory's and 1875 Atlas indicate that Ralph R. Brown lived here. In other words, these resources are the same vintage as the photo. I judge the man standing in the lawn toward the center of the picture is Mr. Brown. Perhaps one of the boys in the picture is Harry Brown who, when he operated the farm, called it Orchard Dale Fruit Farm.

The picture is so typical of this era when all photos were done by professional photographers. Notice how the people are not grouped together but spread throughout the scene. Take note of children on the fence, people in a carriage, two women on the side porch, two girls on the front porch and a man and woman on the balcony above.

When the picture was taken, the house would have been fairly new. It was built in the Italianate style and features as a focal point a cupola. The front porch was also dressed up with arches and a decorative railing.

When Harry and Pearl Brown acquired this house, they greatly enlarged the front porch and added a much larger rear wing. After they died in the 1950s, the house was

removed and replaced with a modern style residence.

The cupola was saved as a garden ornament and playhouse for the younger generations. This artifact remains today as a memento of the past just a short distance from the grave site of Elijah Brown, who is buried in the old cemetery seen in our photo behind the white board fence in the distance, behind the horse.

Notice the horse moved its head during the time exposure of this photo, thus causing a blur.

Elijah Brown was the first settler to be buried in Orleans County, having died in 1805. His widow and her children were undaunted and because of their fortitude remained to conquer the wilderness and thus set the stage for future generations of Browns.