



Bethinking of Old Orleans

Vol. XXVI By C.W. Lattin, Orleans County Historian No. 8

Reminiscences 2-20-04

This will be our second week of reminiscences, which are compiled from my own recollections. I'm sure many readers of this column will recall some of these things from days gone by.

Do You Remember?

When Monday was wash day and clothes were sprinkled, rolled up and placed in the refrigerator for ironing?

When the milk man delivered milk in glass bottles with paper caps to your home?

When all cars were standard shift and you stuck your left arm out the drivers' window as a directional signal?

When the noon whistle (steam) sounded from the boiler house at the State School and also was blown when a prisoner escaped?

When boys wore short flat top cuts with longer hair on the sides combed straight back?

When we used the term mankind thinking we were all inclusive rather than sexist?

When two or three World War I veterans lived in every neighborhood?

When students from the Blind School in Batavia would come around selling brooms?

When many people had to burn barrels, and took their own cans and other nonburnable trash to a dump?

When all our canal bridges had wood plank decking and kerosene lanterns hung along the canal bank?

When ovens didn't clean themselves or refrigerators defrost

themselves or talk to you?

When Father McCabe walked the country roads reading his missal and Mrs. Peddler commanded everyone's respect at the Albion Grammar School?

When all telephone calls were made through the operator over a party line and most numbers didn't exceed five digits?

When funerals were conducted in family residences, and the undertaker brought a raft of wooden folding chairs and placed a large folding screen behind the casket as a back drop?

When rainwater from gutters and downspouts was directed into a basement cistern, known as soft water, and was used for washing, and flushing toilets?

When teachers used film strips synchronized with a record that beeped, meaning turn the knob on the film strip projector to the next frame?

When such institutions as the Odd Fellows (IOOF) and the Grange were the focal points of community activity and Christian Scientists numbered two churches in Orleans County?

When harness shops still were being run by John G. Peters in Lyndonville, Sam Watt in Albion and Homer Heady in Medina?

Our photo, taken about 1950, shows Sam Watt astride his harness makers vice stitching on a leather strap.