

Carriage factory

BY C.W. LATTIN

Our photo, which was probably taken around one hundred years ago, shows the Henry Sears Carriage Factory in Albion.

This was located north of the canal at the corner of Main and Caroline streets. In fact, Caroline Street was simply dirt as it shows in the lower part of our picture.

The carriage factory was a large two-story structure with the name of the establishment prominently painted on the north side. A ramp appears on the back end of the building to the second floor where painting of carriages occurred.

The house, which just shows over the ramp, is now the residence of Bernie and Linda Baldwin on North Main St. The stone building to the far left in our picture was built as a blacksmith shop facing Caroline Street. Both the blacksmith shop and the Sears building have been gone for almost 100 years.

In the early 1920s, George Smith built a brick business block at this corner on the site of the old carriage factory for a bowling alley and dance hall. Currently this building owned by William Wittman is used for apartments.

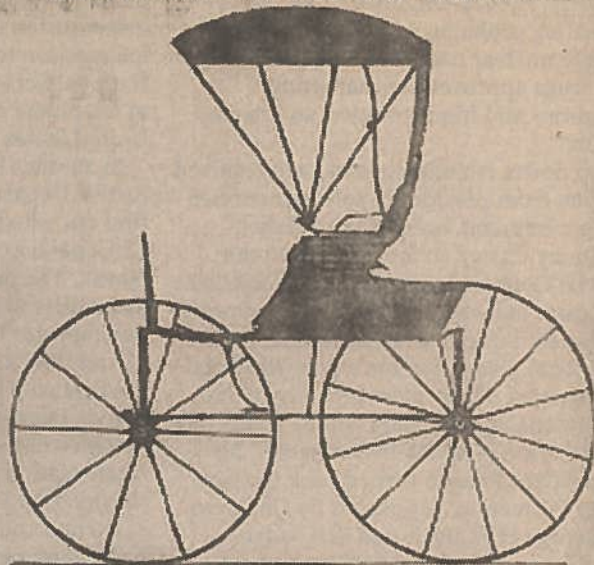
Henry Sears (1810-1893) established his carriage business in Albion in 1840. His sons, Alpheus and William, took over their father's business and it became known as Sears Bros. The 1911 Orleans County Directory indicates that Paul H. Sears was a dealer in carriages and running a garage at this location. Hence, a third-generation of the family to be engaged in this business at that location.

However, by 1913, the county atlas shows the old Sears building gone and the 1915 directory has no indication of such a business. All this indicates that the motor car, in a short period of time, replaced an old established business and profession.

Our ad from the 1869 Orleans County Directory shows a full-



**HENRY SEARS,
CARRIAGE FACTORY!**
Established in 1840.



Corner Main and Caroline Streets,
(OPPOSITE CURTIS FOUNDRY)
ALBION, - Orleans Co., N. Y.

The undersigned will continue to manufacture and keep on hand the latest and most approved styles of

Carriages & Cutters,

and offer work in his line of business. Grateful for the patronage he has received from previous patrons, he hopes to secure a continuance of the same.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

page display ad for Henry Sears and his carriages and cutters. It's interesting to note that the ad states (opposite Curtis Foundry). No doubt many of the Sears Carriage cast parts were

forges at the Curtis Foundry. Every village had carriage and wagon factories before the horseless carriage made its debut on the American landscape.

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