

# Busy road

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Our photo this week was taken back in 1925 by Fred Holt. His intent was to photograph a minor auto accident or "fender bender" at one of Albion's busy intersections.

It is still a busy intersection, but it is doubtful if many readers will be able to determine by the photo just where this is. The landmarks that give us our bearings have greatly changed over the years. This intersection of two state highways remains today as one of the busiest in the county with thousands of people passing through here every day.

This picture shows the northeast corner of routes 8 and 31 or Main Street and East Avenue. This is the best picture I've ever seen of the wonderful house in the background that once stood on that corner. Like several of its venerable neighbors, this residence met its demise around 60 years ago.

With the creeping of commercialization, this once beautiful neighborhood is now hard to recognize through old pictures such as this.

Architecturally, this house was an Italian Villa. We note such features as a low pitched roof with wide overhang supported on decorative brackets. A three-story tower created a focal point. Round-headed windows and triple windows were often embellishments



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found on such Italianate buildings. In my judgment, it would have been built in the 1870s.

It was first the home of Henry A. Bruner, who was the editor and publisher of *The Orleans American*. I find that the 1911 and 1921 Orleans County inventories list Willis G. Carmer as a resident. He was the superintendent of the Albion Schools at the time. His son, Carl Carmer, later became a noted author. Following the Carmers, the house became the home of Burt McNall, who with his brother Freeman McNall, ran an Albion furniture store and funeral home.

In the late 1940s, a fire caused some damage to the house, after which it was torn down. I recall just the foundation standing there for a time when the lot was sold to Texaco for a gasoline station. A little dairy bar, known as the "Milk House," was located on the north part of the lot in the 1950s.

In 1997, Rite Aid purchased this lot and built the Rite Aid Drug store at this corner. The house in the distance to the left was known as Maple Manor, which is now the site of Burger King.