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Electricity comes to Orleans

BY C.W. LATTIN

Orleans County historian

This photo, taken in January 1895, shows the Pullman Memorial Church in Albion at the corner of Main and East Park streets. However, let me draw your attention to the archaic looking street light in the upper left corner. These peculiar cone-shaped lights hung on wires suspended over the major intersections.

Albion was a progressive community, so on April 12, 1890, the village was illuminated by electric arc lamps. These replaced the use of gas lights.

It was reported that the streets were crowded with people anxious to see the difference. The general opinion was that these new lamps were superior to gas.

It was Louise Hart, daughter of Hon. E. Kirke Hart, who had the honor of turning on the lights for the first time at 7:30 p.m. April 12.

The Pullman Church, built in 1894, was the first church in Albion to be illuminated by electric lights. However, some of the fixtures were also piped with gas in case the power went off.

The first power was generated in the village in



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

the late 1880s.

In 1890 the Albion Power Co. bought property at Waterport and developed a plant using water power.

Not everyone changed over immediately from gas to electricity. For example, Christ Episcopal Church was not wired until 1914, 20 years after the first church was wired.

In perspective, the area

was progressive when we consider what A.L. Swett was doing simultaneously in Medina in developing electric generation.

Edison had only devised a successful electric light bulb in October 1879. Consequently, there was a rapid development of electric generation for illumination in a short period of time.