

# EMPIRE COUCH COMPANY

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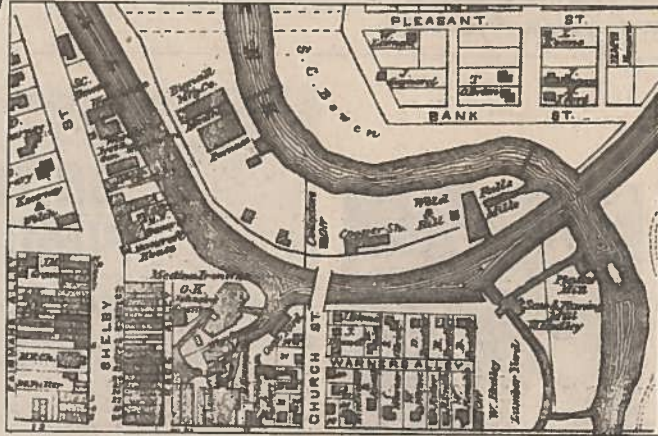
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The 1913 Orleans County Atlas contains numerous articles about farms and business establishments. The following information tells about the Empire Couch Company in Medina:

"The Empire Couch Co. was incorporated in 1901, and bought the stone warehouse which had comprised part of the plant of the Bignall Manufacturing Co., on the tow-path side of the Canal. They also bought from A.L. Swett a part of land sufficient to enlarge the building and serve as lumber storage. It immediately became necessary to add a two-story building, 40 x 70, to the factory, and an office and stock room, 40 x 40. In the fall of 1903, another story was added to the entire building, to take care of the increasing business of the company.

"In 1904, Mr. S.E. Filkins acquired the majority of the stock of the company, and interested Messrs. J.D. Smith and A.G. Phillips to take the balance of the stock and assume the active management of the industrial and financial affairs of the company.

"In 1906, it was found necessary to add another building, 40 x 70 — three stories, in an endeavor to keep pace with the fast increasing business of the company, which had acquired a wide reputation as making one of the best constructed medium grade



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## Bethinking of Olde Orleans

lines of furniture in the East.

"The company continued to occupy this plant until it was appropriated by the State of New York in May 1913 to make way for the Barge Canal work. At this time Mr. Filkins expressed a willingness to dispose of his stock in the company, to Messrs. Smith and Phillips, for a consideration which they accepted and reorganized with J.D. Smith, president and A.G. Phillips, secretary and treasurer.

"May 15, 1913, the Empire Couch Co. entered into a long term lease with S.A. Cook & Co. for their property on Orient Street, consisting of two large factory buildings, a lumber shed and a dry kiln of sufficient capacity for their

needs, and lumber storage extending from the building to Center Street. The plant is well lighted, heated by steam throughout, automatically sprinkled and in all, comprises one of the best adapted, and most complete furniture factories for its capacity in the country.

"The Empire Couch Co. makes a large and popular line of rockers and three piece suites, davenport and couches in leather, tapestry and plush, and are represented by a corps of efficient salesmen covering the United States and part of Canada."

To help visualize where the company was originally located, I include a map from the 1875 Orleans County Atlas. To the upper left corner of the map we see the Bignall Mfg. Co., the general area where the Empire Couch Company was first located. Note that Church Street back then crossed over the canal to the tow path on the north side.