

# Calling the market for deliveries

BY C.W. LATTIN

Orleans County historian

Let me direct your attention to the advertisement at right which appeared in a booklet published by the local

Women's Christian Temperance Union in 1902. At a quick glance it's totally uneventful, but when we stop and analyze all the parts, it suggests that life was different at the time.

The ad states, "Ring Up." Just imagine calling your friendly grocer and giving him the list of your needs over the phone and then having him deliver the groceries to your house free of charge. Well, I can remember a few people doing that even back in the 1950s. However, by the 1970s, locally owned grocery stores gave up offering such a service, because it was just too costly for them to do so.

Notice that the ad indicates Bell and Citizens' Phones. There were two phone companies at the time, which were not interconnected. Therefore, if

you were to receive calls from all your customers, you had to have two phones — one a Bell and one a Citizens'. As the ad notes, Brooks and Marshman also had both phone systems in their residences. Naturally, some people only had one phone system.

Now let's note their products. Look at what they've used for an illustration — a full grown sheep.

Years ago, mutton was a standard meat staple. By contrast nowadays, one might find in the supermarket a leg of lamb and lamb chops. But because lambs are so cute and associated with children and innocence, I'm sure no butcher would want to illustrate his business with either a lamb or a sheep.

And finally, note the oysters. This is probably

RING UP

Brooks & Marshman,



Dealers in

MEATS,

Poultry, Fish,

OYSTERS and

VEGETABLES,

14 East Bank St., Albion.

Bell and Citizens' Phones.  
also at both residences.

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popularity of this seafood drastically drop off. I'm sure Diamond Jim Brady — the noted 19th century entrepreneur who was said to eat two dozen raw oysters just to start off the meal — would be pretty disappointed nowadays with our fat-free, low cholesterol diets and lack of oysters.

When you do find oysters in the store, they are certainly very expensive and a delicacy. I imagine my grandfather got a whole barrel of them for what we have to pay for just a half-pint.

Charles H. Brooks and Burnett Marshman were grocers and butchers around the turn of the century in Albion. As their ad indicates, they were located at 14 E. Bank St. In my youth I remember that storefront as Mr. Pilato's fruit and vegetable market with crates of produce for sale out on the sidewalk. And what's more, he even delivered his produce.

one thing which has become absent from menus more than anything else. Believe it or not, oysters were a part of every festive meal and for some people a part of almost every meal. Raw oysters on the half shell, oyster cocktail, oysters Rockefeller, oyster stew, escalloped oysters, smoked oysters, fried oysters, and even oyster dressing for that Thanksgiving turkey.

People ate oysters and lots of them. My grandfather, Nahum Lattin, around the turn of the century would buy a barrel of unshucked oysters shipped up on the canal. These live oysters were put in the basement and fed cornmeal to keep them alive so that he always had fresh raw ones to eat out of the barrel.

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