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CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

The Albion Meat Market

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This photo taken in the late 19th century of the Albion Meat Market shows a typical display of meat at the time. Notice the picture was taken during the Christmas season. Back then, the Christmas shopper was a target — as is the same now. The array of meat shown here was an attraction to the customer.

Christmas presents were more minimal in the 19th century, but the food made up for the difference. It was the Christmas dinner that truly made the occasion



festive. Notice whole pigs on display here along with several carcasses gutted out just hanging there ready to be cut up.

Preservation of meats was different before standard refrigeration as we know it today. Various kinds of smoked meats were common as a form of preservation. Cool cellars were often used to keep

food for an extended time. All kinds of pickling was done even for meat years ago.

Today, we might think twice about this kind of open air market.

I recently bought an 1880s ice box from an antique shop for the Cobblestone Museum Ward House kitchen display. It brought all this to mind as the ice box is only knee-height. It is very small inside and would have been used primarily for cream, butter and milk. Other foods at the time were being preserved in other parts of the premises without the use of ice.