

# Bethinking of Old Orleans

C.W.Lattin • County Historian

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Part XVIII  
The Shattuck Residence - Medina

This large and impressive residence was once the home of George H. Shattuck, teacher of penmanship and the author of books on Spencerian writing. Mr. Shattuck came to Orleans County in 1850 and in 1862 married Margaret Bathgate of Medina. They lived in her family home known as Bathgate Place which was located on the southeast corner of West Avenue and Pearl Streets in Medina. It was one of the oldest residences in the village and had been moved to that lot from an earlier location on Main Street.

In 1876 the old house was removed and the magnificent dwelling pictured here was erected on the same lot. George H. and Margaret Shattuck moved into their new home with their three sons William, George, and Algernon during October 1877. Eventually the house was inherited by Algernon or "Al" who sold it to Irving West around 1931, who in turn, sold it to the Moose Lodge. For several years this house served as the club rooms for the lodge. After the lodge built their present building, over thirty years ago, on West Avenue, the old Shattuck residence was torn down. In its place was erected a Market Basket grocery store which has since become the Nichols-Hepp Supply Co. Inc. in the lower photo.

As seen here, when it comes to appearances, so often contemporary buildings just don't compare to the architecture of our ancestors. In this case the demolition of the Shattuck house was a tremendous loss architecturally not only to Medina but to Orleans County. Here is why. This residence was an exquisite example of a most unusual type of architecture to be found in our area. It was built in what we call the "Stick Style", a stylistic term of which I'm sure many readers are unfamiliar. From 1860-1890 the "Stick Style" was predominantly used for resort architecture and almost invariably these buildings were made entirely of wood. The Shattuck house transcended the flimsy "Stick Style" buildings of lake fronts and stood as a restrained example of the style. In essence, buildings of this style are "High Victorian Gothic" which explains the stylized gothic or pointed windows. Many "Stick Style" buildings almost suggest an oriental influence. Here the little canopies above several windows give the effect of being oriental. But most importantly, buildings in the "Stick Style" strongly suggest the basic structure. They, in fact, were an early form of structuralism. By this, I mean "Stick Style" buildings emphasized the frame or structure and its various elements which given an airy feeling. You will note there the decorative angular braces at the upper corners and the weblike braces in the gables and porch. Variations in the roofline with intersecting volumes and a multiplicity of shapes with high-pitched peaks is typical of "Stick Style" work so evident in the Shattuck house. Roofs with truncated gables were frequently covered in shingles forming a fish scale pattern. The spiky, angular quality of the roof and angular bracing made the Shattuck house the most dramatic and best example of this style in Orleans County. It is piteous indeed, that we Americans have often been blind to recognize the voluminous riches of the past and how well based they were in good design compared to modern tacky pieces we've been misled to accept as tasteful.

