

**Rethinking of
Old Orleans**
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FIRE CISTERNS

The above photo which was taken in 1954 shows Main Street in Albion with the Universalist Church in the background. At that time Main Street was being made wider which meant that the old fire cistern had to be filled in as this photo indicates. The cistern was about eight feet wide, eight feet deep and sixty feet long. It was located between the curb and the sidewalk bordering the west side of the Court House Square. Other old cisterns of this type for the same purpose were located at Main and Bank

Streets in front of Marine Midland Bank, Main Street and West Avenue, the south end of Liberty Street near the rear of Fay's and West State Street at West Academy Street on the grounds of the old Albion Grammar School. The latter of these cisterns still remains intact.

Fire cisterns of this sort were built during the last century for emergency fire protection. They were always kept filled with water from the canal with an old-fashioned hand pumper. The one on Main Street was made of Medina Sandstone with a vaulted ceiling for support. When a more sophisticated water works came about, these old fire cisterns became obsolete and were abandoned by the Fire Department. This one on Main Street would have been a hazard had it not been removed.