



Above is an iron tobacco cutter that is on display at the Mill House Museum. Cupples Co. made this particular cutter, which was used in the Ogle Harris & Sons Grocery Store once located at 204 Mill Street. Chewing tobacco was sold in bars, but if a customer wanted a smaller portion the store keeper would cut off a plug that could then be popped in the mouth between cheek and gum. The cutter was attached to the store counter with its sharp blade hopefully out of reach of inquisitive children's fingers!

### **Ogles Store**

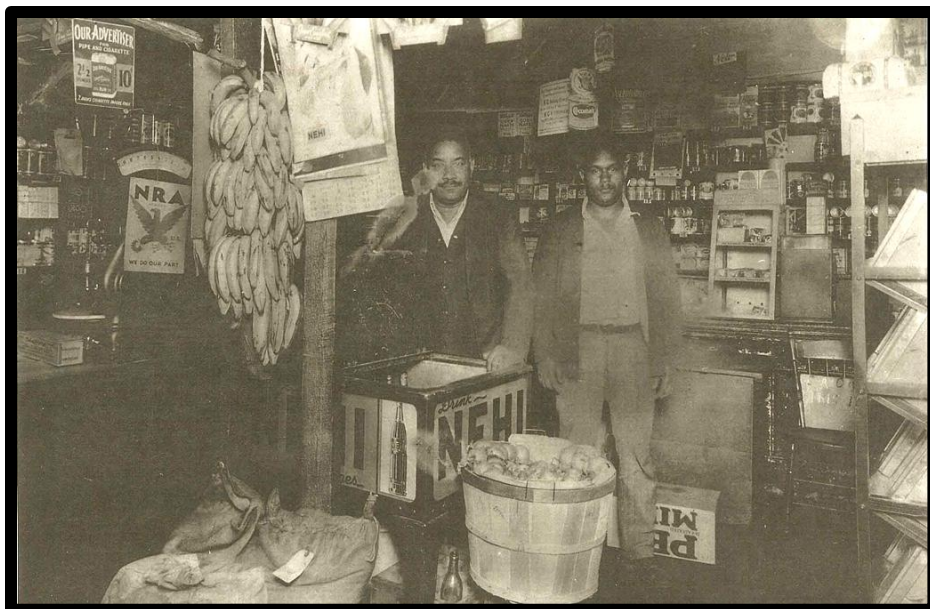
From an article by Martha Roberts that appeared in the February 2005 OHS Newsletter

On display at the museum is an 8x10 photograph of Ogle Harris and his son Arthur standing inside their store, a dimly lit, homey place crowded with meats, vegetables, canned goods, fishing supplies and penny candy. Black History Month reminds us that one of Occoquan's most popular merchants was the son of slaves. "Ogle's Store" had a pickle barrel and a deep, gurgling soda machine with cold cokes in 8 oz. bottles along with root beers and orange and grape Nehi. Saluka Toliver, Ogle's daughter, remembered in her 1999 oral history that in the early days a crackling wood stove warmed the store, and customers -- black and white -- would congregate there on cold winter afternoons. In the 50's a large bench sat

next to the front door, providing a place to rest and watch Washington Street.

Ogle Harris' family actually lived in the 4-room building that later became the store before their larger home was built at Washington and Commerce Streets. Saluka said her father's business began with ice cream which he made in a huge hand-cranked machine and sold at the Odd Fellows Hall next to the church. When they moved to the larger home her father turned the little building into a store. The ice cream business expanded to groceries and Ogle Harris & Sons became a thriving enterprise patronized by citizens of Occoquan and all around the area. Unlike the other food stores in town, Ogle's accepted charge accounts. No Visa cards back then -- the figures were carefully kept in a spiral bound notebook by Ogle and his sons, Arthur and Norman. After Ogle's death Arthur ran the store with his wife Doris and sister Saluka.

Ogle Harris & Sons Grocery was an Occoquan institution from about 1910 until 1972 when Hurricane Agnes damaged the building. It opened just during summers for awhile after the storm before closing down completely. Arthur, his wife Doris, Norman and Saluka have all passed away now and the little building has hosted many shops, none of them involving food. What fun it would be to go back to the time of the photo and visit Occoquan as it was in Ogle's day with chickens pecking in the back yard and produce offered from bushel baskets on the porch.



Ogle Harris and his son Arthur inside their store on Washington Street