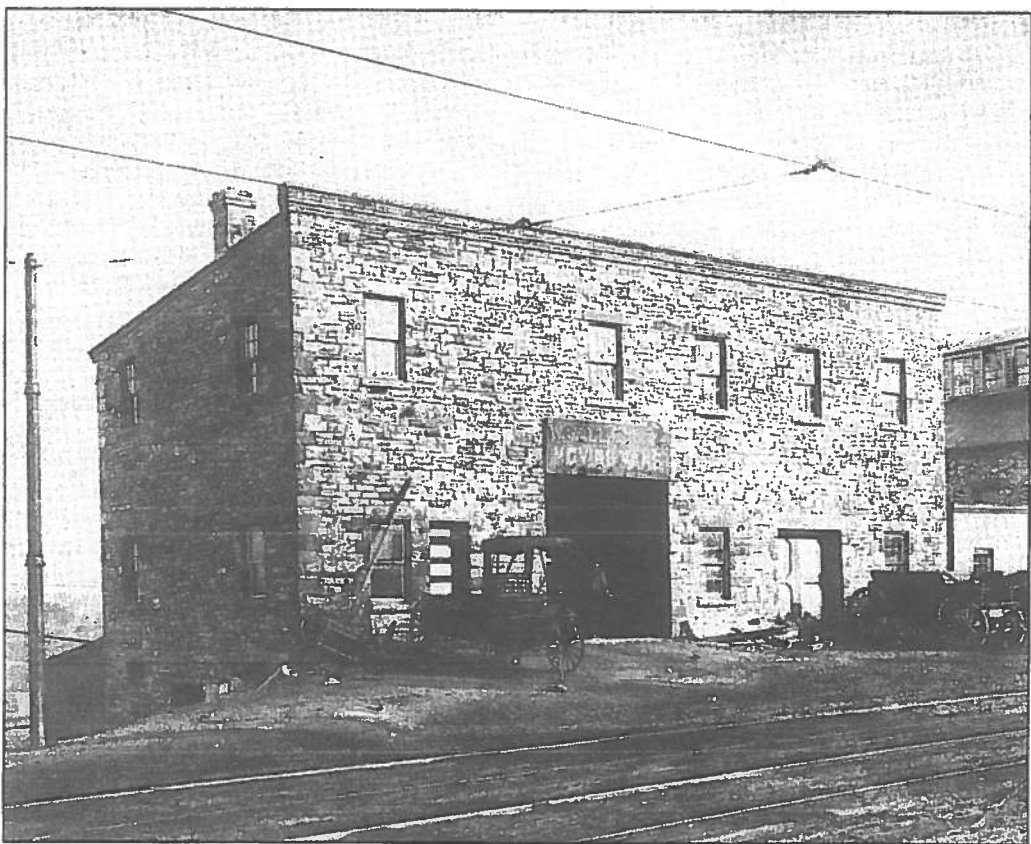


OVERLOOKED ORLEANS



William J. Gallagher ran a successful transportation company in Medina. He later branched out into highway construction and cattle.

Medina businessman operated pioneering trucking company

By MATT BALLARD
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MEDINA — Taken sometime around 1913, an image shows the building occupied by William J. Gallagher's transfer company on North Main Street.

Situated out front is a wagon owned by Gibbons & Stone, a local dealer in pianos and organs. A man stands in the entryway to the building, and a pile of wheels and axles are piled up on the front corner.

A fleet of wagons is parked out front to the right of the building's main door, and the Erie Canal is visible in the background.

Originally opened by George Hall as "Dime Deliv-

ery," William Gallagher purchased the business in 1906 and quickly began the process of expanding and developing the outfit.

Prior to his entry into the moving industry, Gallagher spent two years working as a rural mail carrier out of the Medina Post Office.

Shortly after the photograph was taken, William Gallagher's Moving Vans outfit outgrew its space and eventually relocated to a site on Orient and East Center streets. It was around that time that he introduced a motor truck to his fleet of vehicles, becoming one of the first in Western New York to do so.

By 1921, Gallagher's business was one of the largest of

its kind in this region. A fleet of fourteen wagons with 28 horses and one auto-truck provided service to residents of Medina.

Specialists in moving household furniture, employees were efficient in the packing, crating, wrapping, and preparation of goods for shipment by railroad. Gallagher arranged for items to be shipped to other destinations where comparable firms would complete the process of delivering and unpacking the goods. The padded and covered wagons allowed the business to safely ship items as far out as Buffalo and Rochester while providing hourly delivery services for many businesses in the Medina area.

Gallagher's business interests did not cease with his trucking company. In 1921, he partnered with Charles Ingersoll in a construction business that earned numerous contracts for highway work in the Orleans County area.

Dissolving the partnership and continuing on his own, he was responsible for constructing more than 300 miles of highway throughout Western New York including Niagara Falls Boulevard; Brockport-Spencerport Road; segments of Route 18; Route 5 from Westfield to Erie, Pa. and all of the cement streets in Medina.

Gallagher's largest feat came with the completion of the Route 18 bridge over the Oak Orchard Creek. Since the previous contractor failed to complete the project due to quicksand in the creek-bed, Gallagher completed the 400-foot structure, one of the largest single span bridges in the region.

Most residents of Medina recognize the Gallagher name from the large barn that still stands on Gravel Road near Boxwood Cemetery. Purchasing the farm in the mid-1920s, Gallagher took an interest in livestock and specialized in breeding Guernsey cattle and Belgian horses.

He was held in high esteem throughout Medina, serving with the 3rd New York Infantry (later Co. F 108th) during the Spanish American War, serving as village trustee, and assisting in the organization of the Medina Trust Company. Gallagher later provided an old residence at the corner of Orient and East Center streets to Lincoln Post 1483 V.F.W. as a meeting house.