

Bethinking of Old Orleans

C.W.Lattin • County Historian



VOL. I

NO. 37

FRANK H. LATTIN 1860-1937

One of the most influential, dedicated and tireless men for his unflagging efforts in community betterment during recent past history was the Hon. Dr. Frank H. Lattin of Gaines. He was the son of Joseph Wood and Mary Haak Lattin. As a boy he became interested in the study of Natural History. While on scouting trips he discovered certain portions of Orleans County were rich in geological products and Natural History specimens. He soon began correspondence with other collectors and by 1900 had the largest mail order business in the world in Natural History specimens. He published a booklet called the OOLOGIST (collector of birds' eggs) and his exhibit at the Chicago World's Fair in 1893 covered 2000 square feet of space in the Anthropological building. His father died when he was nine years old and he worked his way through medical college and received the degree of M.D. from the University of Buffalo in 1899.

He was for many years health officer for the Township of Gaines and was also a school teacher, teaching several years at the old cobblestone school house in Gaines. From 1917 to 1930, he served in the State Legislature as Assemblyman from Orleans County. In the capacity of Chairman of the Assembly Committee on Public Health from 1921 to 1930, he contributed much to the advancement of Public Health in the State, endorsing and defending, if necessary, many of the progressive health measures which were enacted during those years.

He was also a history enthusiast starting the Old Schoolmates Reunion at the Cobblestone School in Gaines and he held a major role in the Gaines Centennial Celebration in 1909, writing and promoting Gaines history. Interest in his own genealogy produced volumns of family lineage and in the 1920's he was corresponding with over 1200 descendants of his ancestor Richard Lattin who first landed at Concord, Mass. in 1638. His daughter Virginia Lattin Morrison resides in the family home at Gaines where Dr. Lattin, his wife May (Bullard) Lattin and their two daughters Dorothy and Virginia grew up.