

Bethinking of Old Orleans

Vol. XVII

C.W.Lattin County Historian

No. 46

STAGE COACHES AND THE HISTORIC RIDGE

11-15-95

The following information is found in a little booklet entitled The Historic Ridge published by the Orleans Chapter DAR in 1926.

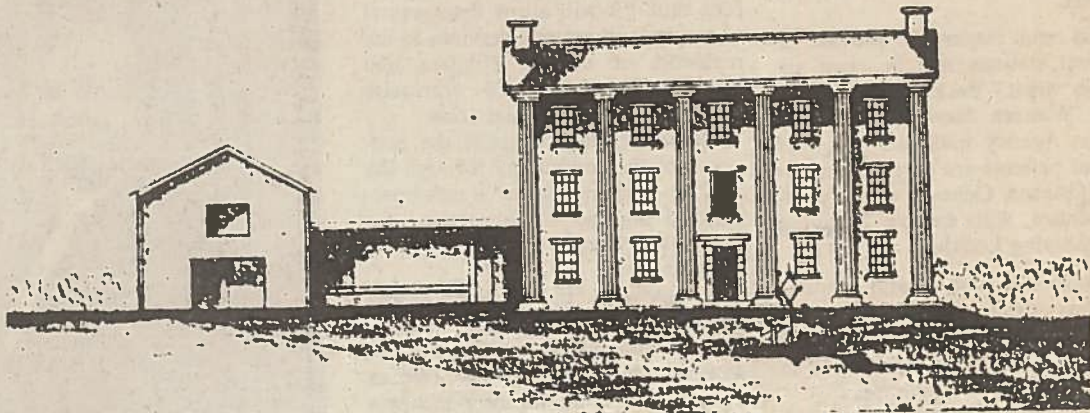
"Before the completion of the Erie Canal and the building of the railroads the dependence for public conveyance was mainly the old stage coaches.

"These ran west from Canandaigua either to Buffalo direct, or by way of the Ridge road, Lewiston and Niagara Falls. The latter route was controlled by the Coe Brothers at one time and later by parties named Hildreth. It was established in 1816 and ran one each day both ways. The passengers paid both first and second class fares---the owner of a first class ticket being entitled to an inside seat. As there was room for only twelve passengers on the inside of the coach, the top would be often crowded, the baggage furnishing the seats for the travelers. In 1828 the Pioneer line was established. A number of wealthy gentlemen living principally in Rochester who believed that the Sabbath was violated by the running of stage coaches on that day organized a line to run on week days only. This route left the Ridge at Wright's Corners for Lockport and thence west to Niagara and Buffalo.

"It met with much competition and was discontinued in about two years. The coaches used were the old-fashioned elliptical box pattern, resting on longitudinal leather springs and contained four interior seats. In the winter season a coach box of different pattern was used, resting on bobs. This was rectangular in form with side doors and windows, and with the same seating capacity as the former.

"As the country became settled and population increased, more taverns were needed to accommodate the tide of travel, and many, more or less pretentious, were erected along the route. The town of Gaines at one time contained at least ten, each one doing a flourishing business.

"On entering Gaines from the east, the first stop was made at the Five-Mile House, or Huff's Tavern, which was erected by John Huff in 1816, and afterwards occupied by William Huff, Jerry Dunn and Horstio N. Ball. Here the mail carriers between Canandaigua and Lewiston used to stop overnight. Gaines



*Gaines Tavern. Harley C. White Proprietor
Destroyed by Fire in 1844*

The Mansion House