

# Bethinking of Old Orleans

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## FIRST DAY OF PHEASANT SEASON

This old family snapshot was taken on the "First Day of Pheasant Season 1917". It shows my father, Cary in front, and grandfather Nahum, standing in the auto. I believe my great aunt, Anna Clift, Nahum's sister, took the picture because of the background. The Clifts lived on Gaines Basin Road in the Town of Gaines just north of the Erie Canal. The barn in the background is still there and the house with the closed window blinds, is now the residence of Mr. and Mrs. Richard DePeters. Posed with shot guns and hunting dogs, these two hunters of yesteryear appear to have had pretty good luck. Not only did they get a couple of pheasants or so, but also two raccoons which are hanging by the rear wheel. The dog in the back seat by Nahum was called "Rove". The other dog standing on the running board belonged to the Clifts.

After the pheasants had been picked and gutted, my grandmother had my father split them down the back. She filed them with dressing and covered them with homemade bacon strips. The birds were then baked breast down, in her wood-fired range. They came out tasting "Oh, so good!"

As to the auto pictured here, my father said that he paid \$250.00 for it brand new in 1917 shortly after he graduated from high school. As it did not come with a starter, it had to be cranked each time to get it going. The windshield is far from what would be considered an aerodynamic design.

Note that both men are wearing their hunting license button which had a serial number on each one. I believe when this photo was taken eighty - one years ago, there was no limit on



how many pheasants one could shoot.

The Gaines Town Clerk tells me Pheasant Season this year is from October 19 - November 15 and that two male pheasants is the daily limit.

Hunters now have to take a safety course before getting a license. My father and grandfather simply went to the Town Clerk and bought their license with no questions asked.

On one occasion back in the 1920's, when my father and Marcus Phillips were hunting together, my dad killed three pheasants with one shot. Marcus wouldn't have believed it if he hadn't seen it happen. It was something they talked about for years. With a daily limit of two now, that could have caused a problem.

The John White Game Farm near Basom, N.Y. through DEC releases 60,000 chicks each season into open public lands and later 15,000 more developed pheasants. By doing this, the pheasant population is kept stocked for area sportsmen.