

Rethinking of Old Orleans

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C.W.Lattin

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Oak Orchard Hotel

The information written on the back of this photograph indicates that it was taken in 1859. The men and boys are standing in front of the Oak Orchard Hotel which was located at Oak Orchard-On-The-Ridge. This hotel was on the north side of the road just west of the large old Cobblestone Inn at the corner of the Oak Orchard River Road. Assuming that the dating is correct, that makes this a very early photograph. Noting that these men are dressed, somewhat suggests this period of time. Certainly the number of stove pipe hats sets the time frame. Judging from the architectural details, my guess is that the building was built in the 20's.

The names of those pictured were also included on the back of the picture. From left to right: Biron Miller (bar tender), Ed. Emerson, unknown, Harrison Oderkirk, Edgar

Parker, Mr. Covert, Shed Jackson, John Stinson, Frankie Pierce, Dr. Pierce (Hotel Keeper), Vick Fancher, John Agan, Mr. Wyland (Hotel Keeper), Hamilton Bunn, Charlie Eccleston (boy), Wallace Eccleston, George Emerson, Ralph Towsley, John Hill and Morris Achilles.

The way I understand the arrangement of names, the hotel keepers are the two men standing in front of the doorway with the high stovepipe hats. I assume they must have had a partnership in this hotel venture. Hotels or taverns of this nature were located every few miles along the historic Ridge Road when stage coaches traveled from Canandaigua to Lewiston along this route from 1816-1850. Both travelers and horses needed frequent respites from dusty, bumpy traveling conditions in those early years.

Why these people gathered for this picture is anybody's guess.

