

Gaines meets the demands of early travel

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The following information about hotels in the hamlet of Gaines is taken from a booklet published in 1909, titled "Historical Sketches Of The Village And Township Of Gaines." These particular paragraphs relate to the early days of stage coaching and the service provided to tourists by local hotels and taverns.

"Travel had now increased to such an extent that eight to 10 coaches passed through daily, carrying emigrants, businessmen and visitors to Niagara Falls. Gaines was probably at this time — the most important village on the Ridge, and when the stage driver blew his horn as he reached the eastern boundary of the Hutchinson farm and cracking his whip over his six-horse team made a grand entrance into the village, a general bustle ensued.

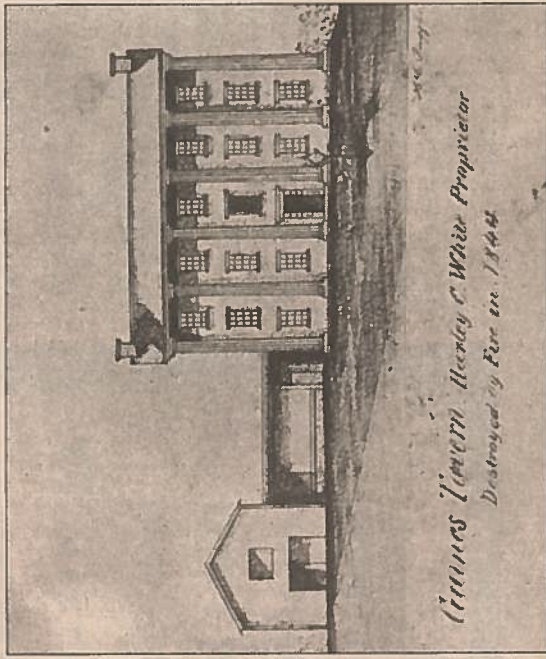
"The crowd usually centered around the Mansion House, which was erected by Wm. Perry in

1816, and stood on the north-west corner of the Ridge.

"It has been described as a large, three-story wooden building, with high Grecian columns, and was one of the oldest and most imposing structures of its kind between the Niagara and Genesee rivers (the accompanying drawing shows the Mansion House). At this hotel, the stages stopped for refreshments and to change horses. Among the many noted guests entertained under its roof, perhaps the most distinguished were Gen. Scott and Henry Clay, the latter of whom gave an informal reception in its parlors with many leading men of the county. The proprietors of the Mansion House were W. Perry, Selah Bronson, P. McOmber, E.

Bethinking of Olde Orleans

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CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Curtis, Bronson & Collins, Sam Scoville, E.S. Butler, H.C. White (formerly of the Frontier House at Lewiston) and S.D. Walbridge. This hotel burned in 1844.

"The first tavern in the Village of Gaines was built by Oliver Booth in 1811, and stood near the site of the present hotel. It was a log structure of one and a half stories high, with a big chimney in the middle and

two front entrances — one leading into the bar room, the other into the general reception, dining and sleeping room and contained in all five rooms. In this tavern was held the first town meeting, April 2, 1816. It was soon replaced by a frame building having two large chimneys at each end, which was afterward lengthened on the east side, giving it the present shape."