

# Bethinking of Old Orleans

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County  
Historian

1-9-85



Vol. VII

No. 2

## Guard Gates

These two photos show the work which took place for the installation of the canal guard gates just west of the Village of Albion off the Albion-Eagle Harbor Road. The first picture was taken on May 12, 1913 right after the piers for the guard gates and the adjacent Lattin's Bridge were poured. The Gaines Basin Road bridge which was also new at the time shows in the far distance. The second photo was taken one month later on June 12, 1913. Here we see a large derrick mounted on a barge, hoisting the north guard gate into position. Both photos were taken before the adjoining bridge was erected that now leads to the Bowman farm.

Our present canal system was last improved in this area during the years 1911-14. At that time guard gates were erected every few miles along the canal to be lowered in order to stop extensive flooding in case of a break in the bank or to shut off certain segments of the canal for other reasons. Other guard gates in this county are located at the Bates Road bridge east of Medina, the Route 237 just north of Holley and near the county line east of Middleport.

This site pictured west of Albion is now the scene of a major construction project aimed at rejuvenating these guard gates. During the years, the south or left-

hand tower pictured, has shifted, making it almost impossible to raise and lower the south guard gate. Legend has it that these piers were set with great difficulty because of quicksand. This possibly explains the reason for the shifting of the tower. The same mushy sand and muddy conditions exist today in this spot.

The contract for this project has been let by the N.Y.S. Department of Transportation to the Meaott Construction Corp. of Fishers, N.Y. During the next four months new piers will be set 175 feet west of the present location. Gerald J. Mead who is in charge of the project explained that it will take 1100 yards of poured concrete to build these foundations. When these are completed the present towers and guard gates will be moved to the new piers. The machinery will be updated and the motors which move the mammoth gates will be rebuilt. The towers and gates will then be sandblasted and painted. This entire project which will amount to over \$600,000 will be completed by May 1, 1985. The old piers will be left in place as they also support the bridge which is not a part of this renovation project.