

Lewiston
History
Mysteries

Did Catherine Hustler, of Lewiston, invent the cocktail? James Fenimore Cooper, famous American author of "The Spy" thinks so!

Catherine Hustler said, "It warms both body and soul and is fit to be put in a vessel of diamonds."



As Hustler's Tavern may have looked
200 years ago. Sketch by Rich DeCorse.

Lewiston was burned to the ground in 1813 when the British attacked. But strong evidence indicates that Hustler's Tavern was left standing. Why? Some speculate that British officers remembered too many good times they had at the Tavern while sipping a "cocktail" -- a drink that the owner, Catherine Hustler is credited with inventing many years earlier when she stirred a "gin mixture" with the tail feather of a stuffed cockerel (a young male of the domestic fowl.)

The story goes that American soldiers had raided a British commissary and brought Catherine some fowl which she roasted. For the feast, she decorated all the bottles and jars in the tavern with tail feathers. One guest called for a glass of the cocktail, and hence, the name was born.

Hustler's Tavern was located on the northeast corner of Center and 8th Streets in the Village of Lewiston. It's fate has been lost to history. An interpretive plaque stands on the corner to mark the spot.

The Hustler's Pioneer Legacy

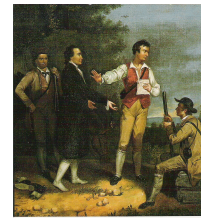


Thomas and Catherine Hustler were among Lewiston's earliest settlers. Thomas died in 1821, and Catherine continued to operate the Tavern until she died in 1832. They are buried side by side in the Village Cemetery next to the First Presbyterian Church. The epitaph on Catherine's stone reads: *Traveler, as you are passing by - As you are now, so once was I - As I am now, so you must be, Prepare for death and follow me.*

Famous Author Pens America's First Widely Circulated Novel in Lewiston, Mentions Cocktail

James Fenimore Cooper (1789-1851) was a prolific and popular American writer of the early 19th century. His first book in 1820, the *Precaution*, was a flop and he was criticized because of its unpatriotic slant. Cooper, who had been a midshipman in the U.S. Navy, was stung by the criticism and he was determined his next book would breathe the very spirit of patriotism.

He came to Lewiston for an extended stay in 1821 to write *The Spy* and was a frequent visitor at Hustler's Tavern. He befriended the owners, Thomas and Catherine Hustler, and was so amused by their personalities he included the couple as the characters Sergeant Hollister and Elizabeth "Betty" Flanagan, in his new novel.



The Spy was nation's first widely circulated novel. It was written here in Lewiston and Hustler's Tavern was referred to as "Hotel Flanagan."

The Spy became the first American novel to achieve a wide circulation. He



James Fenimore
Cooper

referred to Hustler's Tavern as "Hotel Flanagan," and described Catherine's character Betty by saying, "Her faults were, a trifling love of liquor, excessive filthiness, and a total disregard of all the decencies of language; her virtues, an unbounded love for her adopted country, perfect honesty, and a great good nature."

"Betty had the merit of being the inventor of that beverage which is so well known, at the present hour, to all the Patriots who make a winter's march between the commercial and political capitals of this great state, and which is distinguished by the name of 'cock-tail.'"



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Historic Lewiston placemats written and designed by volunteer, Lee Simonson.

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Tuscarora Heroes Book

The amazing and true story of how the Tuscaroras saved Lewiston citizens from the brutal British attack during the War of 1812. The book is now available at DiCamillo Bakery and the Lewiston Museum for \$10.



Tuscarora Heroes Coin

This beautiful new commemorative coin represents the "good luck" the Tuscaroras brought to Lewiston citizens. Available for \$10 at Apple Granny, Village Bake Shoppe, and the Lewiston Museum. (All proceeds go to the monument fund.)

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