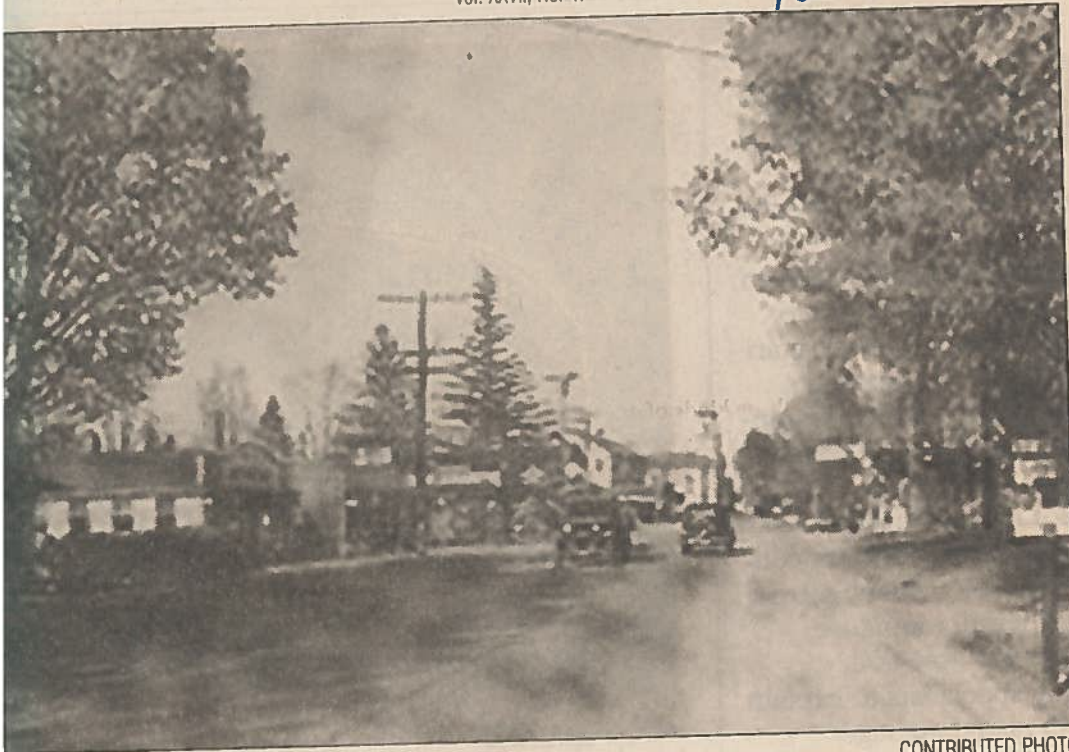


12-22-05



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Gaines 1934

BY C.W. LATTIN

This is a view of the Ridge Road in the hamlet of Gaines in July 1934. "The Ridge" had been paved with concrete about a decade before this picture was taken. Although improved over a dirt road, it is obviously very narrow with only two lanes.

Many of the structures have vanished from this scene in the past 70 years.

The little building only partly seen to the far left was moved to the Cobblestown Museum complex in 1987. It was built in 1938 for a shoe shop and now exhibits the contents of John G. Peters harness shop from Lyndonville.

Next in line is what will be remembered as "the Chatterbox Restaurant." In 1934, it was known as Bern's Restaurant. It

was built in the 1920s and was torn down around three years ago.

Next to it was Bern's Garage with signage indicating "Texaco Products."

Going east a little farther, past the intersection and evergreen trees, was a brick residence from the 1830s that was torn down over 30 years ago.

This large three story building in the distance remains today as an antique shop. Back when this picture was taken it served as the Gaines Grange Hall. A general store occupied part of the first floor. This was later run by Dean Sprague who also served for many years as the Gaines town clerk working that job as well out of the store.

In the distance is the spire of the Congregational Church. The spire was removed in the late 1930s. The church burned down Christmas Eve 1950.

On the right side of the road we see a sign that says "May's Restaurant." This was owned by Frank and May Coventry, who also had gas pumps directly in front of it. This building is presently a gift shop and residence.

This little community reached its height a hundred years before our photo was taken. It was incorporated in 1932 as a village and had more than 400 inhabitants.

By 1934, there were only 200 inhabitants and the village charter had been discontinued by 1853. Settlers had moved to Albion, and Gaines was destined to be a small hamlet on historic Ridge Road.