

The End of an Era as Red & White Store Closes in Hemlock

By Unknown Author - The Livonia Gazette

March 1984



The Red and White Store in Hemlock NY as it looked before closing in 1984.

The end of an era came to Hemlock recently with the closing of Collin's Red and White grocery store. In 1922, the present store, rooms above it, fixtures and ice house were leased from E. B. Woodruff and operated under the name of Collins and Reed. The total rental for the setup was \$300 per year plus up to 40 cakes of ice.

In March 1924, the partnership of Collins and Reed was terminated and the store, which by then also carried a general line of groceries and auto accessories, in addition to meat, came under the full ownership of Earl Collins.

In May of that same year, the market became known as a Red and White Store and was continuously run from that time on by Earl Collins and his wife, Ruth. The store was well known for its fresh meat and produce.

In later years, the store has been operated by Ruth and other members of the Collins family, particularly grandson, Don Collins.

Business has been steadily declining for the last few years due to changing lifestyle and economy of the area, and the Collins' family feel the store can no longer compete with the larger supermarkets.

Earl Collins says the thing he likes best about his store is being able to meet people. And he's had the opportunity to meet many, in the 49 years that he's been in business.

Before opening the store, Mr. Collins peddled milk and worked as a wholesale butcher. While making his butcher deliveries in Rochester, he had a chance to watch many men as they worked, and in this way he learned a lot about meat cutting.

When he first opened his store in the fall of 1921, Mr. Collins operated mainly a meat market. He had a slaughterhouse and did all his own butchering and meat cutting. After two years of renting, he bought the store. He and his wife then moved from their house on Pleasant St, in Hemlock to an apartment above the store.

On May 24, 1924 Mr. Collins joined Red and White, expanding into the grocery business. From then until 1933 he brought out all the produce, groceries and meat for the store from Rochester in his own truck.



Mr. Earl Collins at the meat cutter

Twenty years ago Mr. Collins remodeled the store, changing the old-fashioned counter service to a self-service setup. Over three hundred people attended an open house sponsored by Mr. Collins' grocery company, in honor of the changeover.

Mr. Collins says he was born and raised a farm boy. He enjoys farming and found time to work on his wife's family's farm even while he was running the store. For many years he got up at 5 a.m., went to Honeoye Falls and helped his son milk their cows. He would then eat breakfast and return to Hemlock by 8 o'clock to open the store.

The only trouble Mr. Collins ever had at the store turned out not to be too serious. One night someone took out a window in the back of the store and got in. But the lights of a car coming in the driveway frightened the would-be thief and he fled without taking anything.

Mr. Collins' business has changed greatly from his original meat market. The shelves are filled with groceries, toiletries, and small sewing notions. Modern coolers and display racks line the paneled walls, and in the back of the store is Mr. Collins' butcher



Mr. Earl Collins working in his store.

department, where he still does his own meat cutting.

When asked if there was anything he didn't like about running the store, Mr. Collins smiled. "If I didn't like it, I guess I wouldn't have done it for so long."

Mr. Collins is past retirement age, but as he chats, it's easy to see why he's not ready to give up his store. Here is a picture of Earl and Ruth Collin in their Red and White Store in Hemlock NY. In later years, Ruth and members of the Collins' family continued the store.



Earl and Ruth Collins in 1984

Red and White Store
Earl Collins, Hemlock

Special For The Week End

Servus Matches	6 boxes for 25c
Servus Raisins, seeded and seedless, 1 lb pkg	10c
Walter Baker's Cocoa, 1/2 lb	17c
Walter Baker's Chocolate, 1/2 lb	17c
Flower City Chocolate Drops	19c

REGULAR PRICES —

Postum	Large size, 39c; small, 23c
Campbell's Soups	10c
Red Salmon	29c

FRESH VEGETABLES AND FRUITS ON HAND
QUALITY MEATS AT REASONABLE PRICES
We pay 45 cents for butter and 30 cents for eggs
"Servus Stands for Quality and Economy"

Red & White Store ad in Livonia Gazette 1925.

The Livonia Gazette

Use of all photos and/or text in this article have been approved and granted use courtesy of
www.HemlockandCanadiceLakes.com and www.ConesusLakeNY.org.

Click on or copy and paste the link below to go to the page that was referenced.
http://www.hemlockandcanadiceLakes.com/hcl_business_hemlock_red_white_store.htm