

[Gaines, Chloe Stearns]

The Death of Mrs. Clarence H. Gaines
TALENTED WIFE OF ST. LAWRENCE UNIVERSITY PROFESSOR
Had Been Leader and Teacher in Community's Musical Life for Forty Years

This community was not only grieved at the death Friday of Chloe Stearns Gaines, the beloved wife of Professor Clarence H. Gaines, but there was also a realization of the great contribution she had made to Canon life in the field of music, and how great a loss has been suffered in her death.

For two years Chloe Gaines had experienced poor health, but [?] though she often was, and sometimes crippled with arthritis, she refused to give up her activity in her many pursuits, both in connection with her home affairs and her professional work. A week ago Sunday she led the Universalist choir at the morning services as usual. Late that night, shortly after midnight, she was taken with an acute heart attack. From then until Friday morning she suffered intensely.

The writer of this tribute knew Chloe Gaines from the time he was a small boy living on University Avenue forty years ago. She had attended St. Lawrence University for two years with the class of 1902 and then studied at the New England Conservatory of Music. After this she returned to give music lessons. The writer was among her early pupils at that time, and in recent years his two daughters had both taken piano lessons of her. This is but one of the many examples of Mrs. Gaines' years in the interest of music in this village. In fact it can correctly be said that she had taught three complete generations.

This in itself, though interesting, falls far short of the contribution of her life to Canton. She was one of those rare individuals who not only could teach music well, but loved it and was an accomplished musician. Canton's boys and girls for forty years took piano lessons, violin lessons and voice culture of her. She was an especially talented violinist. On many occasions she had organized and conducted local orchestras, principally in connection with the University student and faculty bodies. Often when The Mimmers were to present a play she would bring together sufficient talent to have an orchestra in attendance, and when this was so, one always knew that the musical program would be of excellence. She was not one to accomplish, or accept, slipshod work. If there was to be music, it must be good music; that was a principle of her entire professional life.

Since 1911 she had directed the choir at the Universalist Church, sometimes playing the organ, often bringing to the church services many delightful treats, both in voice and instrumental numbers.

Due to her untiring efforts, music in Canton has been advanced. Wherever and whenever interest in good music was to the fore, Chloe Gaines was certain to be present either to lead toward that end, or give her unselfish support thereto.

One of her interests in life was her membership in her college sorority, Kappa Kappa Gamma.

The beautiful home on Pine Street had long been a rendezvous for music lovers, just as it had been for those who loved literature. Possessed of rare qualities, unlimited patience, and constant enthusiasm, she made an ideal teacher for younger children...

[Gaines, Chloe Stearns]

Scores and scores of grown people, and an equal number of young people, even down to the children of today had studied under her, had been inspired by her, had learned not only a rich appreciation of music but that equally valued lesson in life, that to do a thing well is to do it thoroughly, patiently, and with understanding.

Mrs. Gaines came of that interesting Winthrop family, the Stearns. Her parents were Spencer Henry and Lois Lorena Marsh Stearns, and at the date of her birth, Oct. 21, 1880, Winthrop was known as Stockholm Depot. The family continued to reside at Winthrop until she had completed her two years at St. Lawrence. Mr. Stearns then moved the family to Ogdensburg, where he was already engaged in the grain business.

Mrs. Gaines had shown talent as a musician as a child. Her interest grew. It was ever-present during her two years at college. Later at the New England Conservatory she studied under Felix Winternitz, Alfred Devoto and Weldon Hunt. Although she returned to Northern New York to teach, she continued her studies in Boston for many years. From 1903 until 1913 she was associated as a teacher with the Potsdam State Normal, and came to Canton weekends to teach her pupils here.

On December 12, 1913 she was married to Clarence Hurd Gaines, by the late Dr. I.[Isaac] M. Atwood at the Universalist church. Her husband had but recently returned to Canton to become a member of the English Department of the University which his father, Dr. Charles Kelsey Gaines, so long served.

Mrs. Gaines is survived by her husband, by their son Richard, who is a member of the faculty of Evans Mills school in charge of music, and by her two sisters, Mrs. Jessie S. Hardie and Miss Jennie Stearns. Mrs. Hardie is the widow of the late Dr. George R. Hardie, who was for years on the faculty at St. Lawrence and who later was one of the founders of Long Island College.

Funeral services were held from the Universalist church on Sunday afternoon at 2:30, Rev. Hugh S. Tigner, her pastor, officiating. Burial was in Evergreen Cemetery.

St. Lawrence Plaindealer, Canton NY, Tue. 10 Oct 1944

Transcribed on 25 Feb 2008 by Karen E. Dau of Rochester, NY