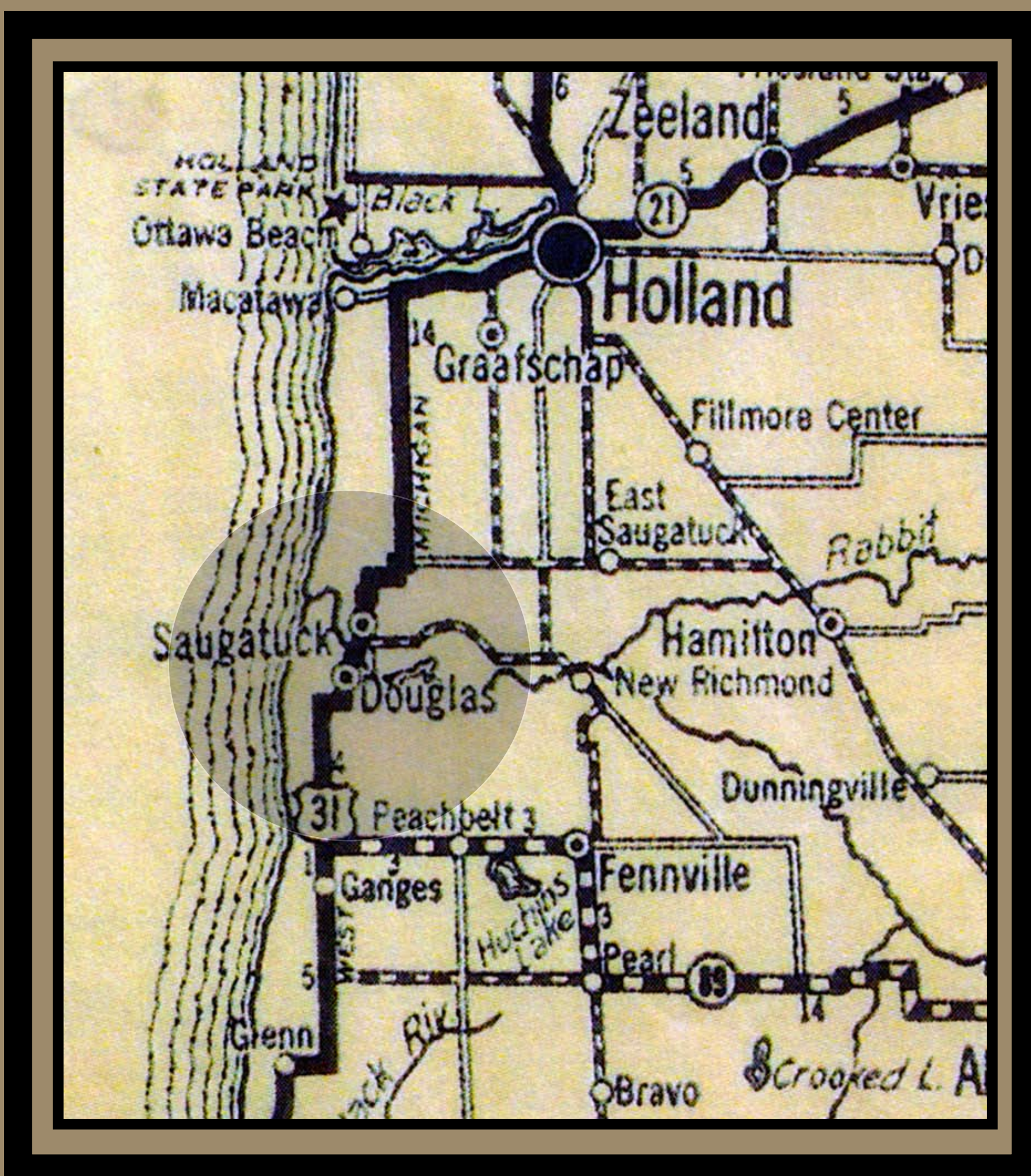


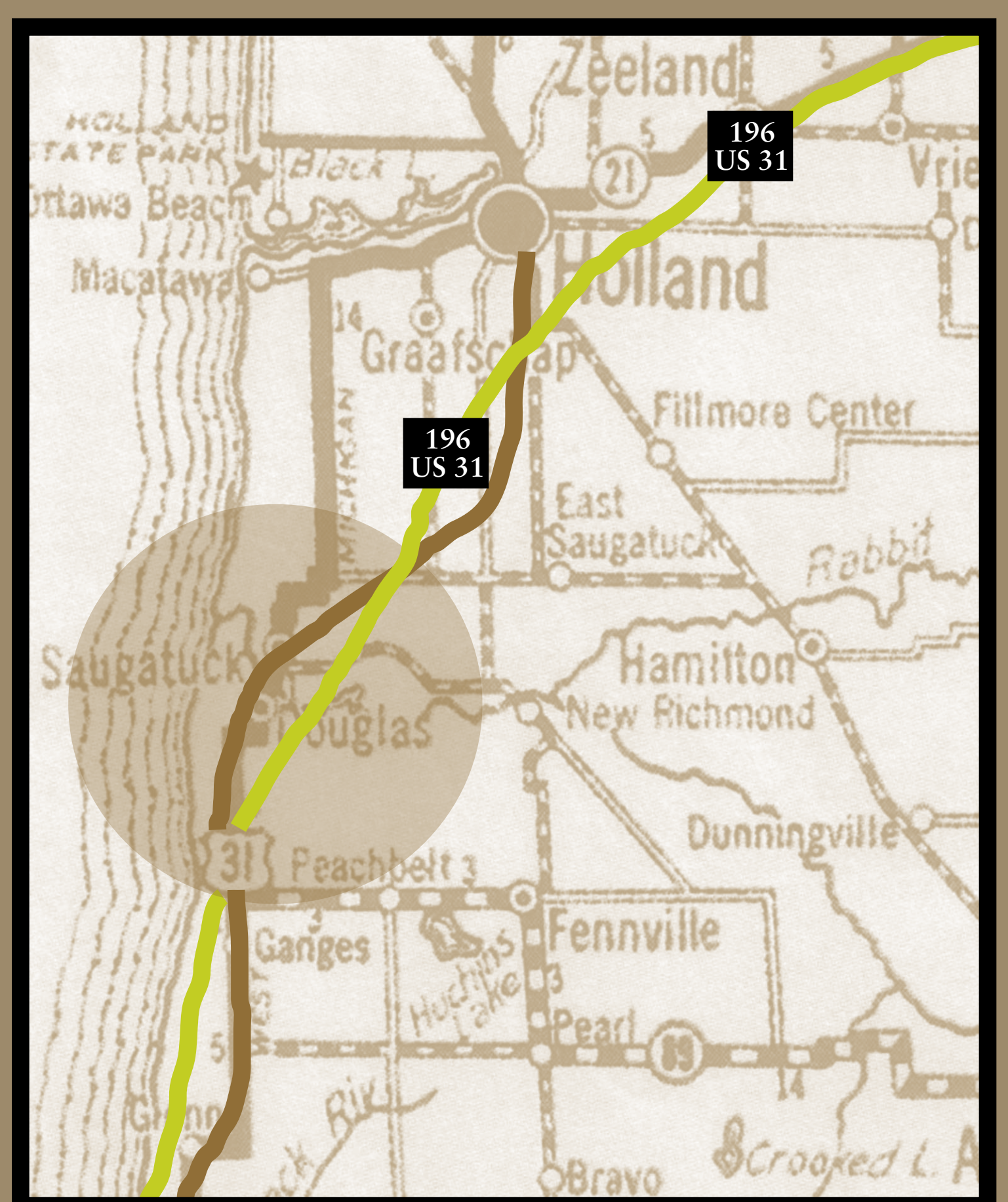
Have the villages ever been on a major highway?

Yes. **US 31** went **RIGHT THROUGH THE MIDDLE** of both towns! To understand the roads of the area prior to 1936 you need to erase from your mind both **I-196** and the **BLUE STAR MEMORIAL HIGHWAY (A2)**. Both are at least partially diagonal roads which cut across the traditional grid system.



This 1927 map shows the roads before the Blue Star Highway and Interstate 196 were built.

This map shows the rerouting of traffic from the village centers by way of Interstate 196 and the Blue-Star Highway. What was anticipated to have a negative impact on the local economy actually helped to preserve the quaint character of the villages.



When the Blue Star Highway was proposed in 1936, taking away the US 31 route signs, the business people of Saugatuck wrote a letter to the editor which wailed, “We know that next year our summer traffic will be using the new highway instead of coming into the village. Well, what are we going to do about it?” Nothing was accomplished but some gnashing of teeth and, except for a few motels, which there was no room to build in the village limits anyway, little was built on the highway to draw business away from the villages.