

This photograph of Allendale's old Toll Gate house probably dates from the early 1900's, possibly about 1905-1910. Later photographs show concrete walls on both the southeast and northwest corners of this intersection, and a higher stone wall on the Toll House corner.

Franklin Turnpike is probably the oldest road in Allendale; it was chartered as a toll road in 1806 and was once part of the Albany Post Road. It is shown on an 1812 map of this area as "the New Prospect-N. Goshen Turnpike." In 1852 the turnpike was taken over by the state and its original width of 60 feet was cut to 50. In studying old maps it becomes evident that the original route of the turnpike through Allendale once followed a slightly different path from that of the present road. A survey drawn by Jonathan Hampton and Benjamin Morgan in 1783 shows that the turnpike proceeded south from Ramsey along basically its present route until just before it reached today's intersection with Crescent Avenue. At this point the road curved westward, then eastward, so that its route through that section of Allendale from Crescent Avenue south to Chestnut Street takes the form of the letter "s". During the first half of the 19th century the area of today's "Allendale" was known as "the Turnpike" taking its name from the newly chartered road running through the settlement. Charity Ackerman, who kept a diary from 1836 to 1841 referred in it several times to families and individuals living "at the Turnpike."

Sometime in the early 1800's, after the Turnpike was chartered as a toll road, a toll-gate and toll house were erected on the southern corner of the present Crescent Avenue-Franklin Turnpike intersection. The "Toll Gate" is clearly shown on I. H. Eddy's "Map of the Country Thirty Miles Around New York City" dated 1812. The toll house was condemned and torn down in 1933. In 1949 Mrs. Fred Koster, who lived nearby on Franklin Turnpike, retold a tale she had heard from her grandmother, Mrs. Gary Storm. Mrs. Storm, who lived in the toll gate house in the late 1800's, originally heard the story from even older residents. The story goes that at some time during the 19th century, the house became known as "the house the elephant kicked over." The tale, handed down from older residents, is that an elephant from a circus traveling along the turnpike became entangled in the toll chain attached to the building. As a result the elephant pulled down a section of the house!

In the early 1800's a stage coach line ran along the Franklin Turnpike, through the "Franklin Turnpike gate" from Ramapo to New York, via Paterson. In 1812-13, Henry I. Traphagen and William Southerland were running this stage with four horses; later, in 1819-20, Garret Bampa ran the stage to Ramapo and Abraham Clearwater carried it "through the Orange Turnpike gate." -----Patricia A. Wardell

