

Abbot, treasurer of the Abbot Worsted Company, operators of the big mills making worsted yarns, powered by water from Forge Pond.

Business boomed during World War I and the company prospered. It was their idea to use these profits to create a model mill community. They tore down the mill tenements and built many multiple and single family homes all most active.

The Abbots erected a recreation hall, where the Abbot band could perform, the Precious girls made music for the silent films, and the mill workers could get a good meal in the cafeteria.

Mr Abbot lived in an 18-room mansion opposite Westford Common. It was Victorian in style with a mansard roof and survived until 1942. It was complete with eight marble fireplaces, a billiard room on the third floor, two maids in the kitchen, a gardener and a coachman - yet "Jack" was "one of the boys" to all the villagers.

The company sponsored all sorts of athletic events but soccer and baseball were the most active. Special trains carried the team, the band and the rooters to such places as Providence, Quincy and New Hampshire to meet with opponents.

Forge Village was a happy, close-knit community where everyone knew everybody - and some, as usual, tried to know everybody's business.

But changes are inevitable. The mill is now a multi-million-dollar modern printing plant, producing the finest books. Workers come from a wide region. Of the grist mill (founded by Jonas Prescott in 1679) there are no remains and the same with the blacksmith and wheelwright shops.

Right now, the villagers bemoan the passing of another old friend, the village tavern. Here men would gather in stormy weather to play pitch with Pete near the pot bellied stove in the store. Women would take Kate's advice as to just the right type and color of yarn to buy.

And men and boys were sure to get a hair cut every other week!