

# Job mix changes over years

By Gordon B. Seavey  
Contributing Writer

**W**hat Westford folk did for a living a century ago is a far cry from the job mix of today. Today the contrast is a case of high tech versus agriculture.

Eighty years ago the selectmen sent a list of persons to "fill the jury box," or in other words, persons who might be called to serve on various juries. This was the era of men only.

Of the 27 names designated, more than 60 percent stated their occupation as farming. In those days, the word "farming" meant big barns and much livestock. It also meant a lot of acreage, hayfields and woodlands, the latter to keep the home fires burning in winter as well as fueling the kitchen range all year round.

Here is a list of 16 farmers who were named: Charles A. Blodgett who found it tough going on Millstone Hill, where Tyngsboro and Groton join Westford; Asa B.M. Eastman who had a small farm on Leland Street; Elbert H. Flagg who had one of the most productive farms, lying in the Beaver Brook region and now laid out in house lots; J. Willard Fletcher of Stony Brook Farm at the Depot, whose grandson disposed of his big

dairy herd and land for more home development; Edward Gould; David Greig, opposite Fairview Cemetery, now taken over by the Hicks conglomerate; George A. Kimball near the Littleton/ Westford line, whose big barn long ago was turned into an ice cream emporium. Frank H. Hildreth, Ebenezer Prescott, Nelson L. Prescott, Henry E. Shorey, Walter Whidden and John Wilson were well known farmers.

The balance of the remaining potential jurors had various occupations. Joseph Bannister and George Q. Gilson were machinists, Frank L. Furbush and Walter Beebe were carpenters, Hugh Daly a wool sorter, John M. Fletcher, as did his father, ran the country store at The Common. Ebenezer Prescott was a stone cutter, probably making granite street blocks for Lowell and Lawrence; John P. Wright, a comic who was always called upon to be toastmaster at any and all functions, and a law clerk in Boston, and Frank Healy, a teamster, probably driving for J.A. Healy, local undertaker as well as being in the hauling business.

*Gordon Seavey, a native of Westford, is the retired publisher of the Belmont Citizen.*