



Clothes drying on the line and chickens strutting happily about are sure signs that spring is just around the corner. These feathered residents of Coldspring Road seem to be anticipating the ducky weather ahead.

(Photo by Garo Lachinian)

Memories of a Westford Boy Scout

By Gordon B. Seavey

The very worthy organization for youth, Boy Scouts of America, recently celebrated its 75th birthday. To commemorate the occasion, old timers like to talk about those early days in their own home town.

Encouraged by the energetic "Uncle Jim" Kibberd Sr. of North Chelmsford, Westford began to organize its Troop 1. To find a scoutmaster was the No. 1 project; to find enough boys in a small town was another.

Charles Robey was an early leader, then came quiet and unassuming Alfred Tuttle, both of whom were untrained but did their best to inspire a handful of boys. The formation of the Lowell Council sort of kept the movement going until the Academy principal, William C. Roundenbush, took over.

The group would meet either in the First Parish Church or the lower floor of the town hall to listen to Doc Orin V. Wells or other town leaders for training in first aid or other valuable practices. Did you ever witness a lively tenderfoot wrapped up in bandages?

The Scout manual was like a bible to each boy.

Troop 1 was particularly active during

World War I. One of the goals was to plant home gardens to produce food for the war effort. On a Scout's honor, the hours spent working in the gardens were carefully recorded. Several of the troop members lived on farms and they already knew how to plant, weed and harvest crops.

Aided by the long hours put in by the Griffin boys on their dad's Parkerville farm and others from farming families, the local troop came out on top when a contest was over.

Westford Wanderings

The first prize was a "trek cart" which had the appearance of a Conestoga wagon in miniature. It was complete with a sheet metal wood-burning stove, cooking utensils, water jug and even forks, spoons and knives. The canvas top came off and the body dismounted from the wheels made a dining table. The wagon sides made two benches — just right for seating eight hungry boys. It was presumed that the scoutmaster was doing the cooking.

The builder of the cart had planned evi-

dently that the wagon would last forever. Built of planks and wheels sturdy enough to carry a ton or two of gravel, it was so heavy that the boys had to hitch ropes to the front "T" shaft to assist the two "horses" to pull the contraption along the dusty roads.

Then, too, the blacksmith had milled right hand threads only to the axle shaft. This meant when the cart was pulled, the right hand wheel would come off; when it was pushed, the left hand wheel would loosen up, all in the matter of not too many yards.

All this resulted, allowing time for replacing wheels and looking for lost nuts, in consuming about two hours to make the trip from the Center to camp on the shores of Forge Pond. Sleeping on the cold hard ground (beneath the pup tents also included in the prize) was something new, and different.

On their honor, though, they stuck it out, possibly dreaming that mother's cooking was pretty special and that bed upstairs at home, even though one had to sleep with a brother, was heaven, too.

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