

'Mogey' Tuttle: turn of century man on the move

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WESTFORD — It perhaps can be said that Alfred Tuttle traveled more miles on more roads in Westford than most — for he spent most of his life in town on moving vehicles.

First he became a conductor, then motorman on the town's fledgling streetcar line inaugurated in 1907. Later he turned to delivering the mail and riding the fire wagons and trucks.

For seven days a week he guided the trolley from Westford Common to Brookside, a distance of three miles. The first run of the day was at 6:15 a.m.; the final, 10:35 p.m.

At Brookside, more commonly known now as Nabnasset, his passengers would either take the Stony Brook Railroad to Lowell Depot (change there for Boston), or get a Lowell & Fitchburg trolley to North Chelmsford, then to Merrimack Square in the heart of Lowell.

Cost of the full ride was 7 cents. However, if one chose to get aboard at Banister's Corner (Lowell and Providence roads), the tariff dropped by 2 cents.

If one from the Center wished to drop off to visit with Sam Taylor, jovial occupant of the Old Oaken Bucket Farm, at the corner of Stony Brook Road, or friends nearby, the fare was a nickel.

During the winter of 1909-1910, the line was shut down. Blizzards

and great snowdrifts were too much for the four-wheel trolley car.

Tuttle, known to all as "Mogey," was a quiet bachelor who lived with his sister, Ruth, on the family homestead on Boston road. She taught in the Frost School. His uniform was not always impeccable, although to add color, he usually had a flower in his buttonhole.

With the event of the Rural Free Delivery (RFD) in town, the opportunity came for Mogey to switch jobs, although the new position might still mean continuous travel.

For this job, it was required that he furnish his own transportation. His was a Model T Roadster with a tray beside the driver's seat for some of the mail, and a box in the rear for the balance.

His car was the talk of the town, especially when the snow came. He rigged his Ford with caterpillar wheels on the rear and ski-like runners on the front. True to the postal service code, this carried him and the mail over the drifts along the back roads, as well as the well-trodden main streets, in spite of snow and sleet. The mail went through!

During much of his lifetime in

Westford, the Center Fire Station was a small, white building adjacent to his barn. This housed the horse-drawn wagon which carried a couple of ladders, some shovels and brooms for forest fires, and a dozen or so hand fire

extinguishers, the soda and acid type.

Tuttle was a volunteer fireman all his life and unless a substitute took over, he hitched the family horse to the piece of equipment and raced to the scene.