

Westford Recollections

by Mrs. Charles S. Kennedy
'About 60 Years Ago'

Earlier in this century — about 60 years ago — Westford had had a weekly newspaper entitled 'WESTFORD WARDSMAN'. The following excerpts from the paper capture the true flavor of this country town before the advent of modern society

Oct 30, 1909

The Edward M. Abbot Hose Co. has voted to purchase red shirts caps and belts. Several of the citizens of the town have subscribed liberally toward the expanse.

People in this village were obliged to do without the town water supply thursday from eight in the morning until four in the afternoon. This was necessary on account of relocating the hydrant at the west end of the common, which was too near the triangle where the new soldiers' monument is to stand.

Nov 20, 1909

FORGE VILLAGE

A large number from here attended the husking bee which Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Blodgett gave at their home in Westford. All report an excellent time with red ears in abundance.

GRANITEVILLE

Business in C. G. Sargent's shop continues to be very good and there is some talk of running overtime a few hours each evening during the week.

August 14, 1909

The shed at the back of the Congregational church, that was tipped over on the eve of July fourth and remained an unsightly object since, has been disposed of. Miss Ella Hildreth has bought it to use in her pasture as a shelter for cows.

Everything is comparatively quiet just now in our hill-top village, all except the berry fields. They are regular hives of industry and the growers are getting a good crop both in quality and quantity. Large shipments are carried over the road each night to Boston.

Oct 8, 1910

ACCIDENT

Notwithstanding the caution and efforts of the selectmen to regulate the speed of automobiles to the safety of the public as well as of the inhabitants of the automobiles, the headlong destructive speed still fills the air with swift blinding dust. Even this did not prevent a smashup accident early Monday morning on Depot Street at the Cold Spring Farm. An auto driven by William Merrill of Concord crashed into a two-horse team owned by J. Henry Fletcher of Belmont and driven by Joseph F. Richardson who was thrown out and badly bruised. Dr. Wells was summoned and soothed conditions. A rear hind leg of one horse was broken. With all his legs he was valued at \$325. The wagon and auto got badly tangled up in this sudden come together and received many joint compound fractures. The accident occurred on a sharp curve or rather the high rate of speed of the auto made it a sharp curve.

March 4, 1911

THE RACING

The horse racing on Forge Pond on Saturday brought out as large a crowd, if not larger, than the race of last week.

The racing, which was run under the same conditions as last week, was open to Westford, Littleton and Groton, but only Westford and Littleton participated.

The track was in the same poor slushy condition of last week owing to the warm spell which made it heavy going, and again this was to the advantage of Henry Healy's chestnut 'Joe' of Graniteville who captured the first prize. Austin Healy's 'Dolly' took second, but 'had to go some,' as both Yapp's bay and Dr. Blaney's 'Knox Gelatine Boy' were close at her heels. W. Yapp's bay captured third prize, which made the score the same as the previous race.

Edward Redding of Lowell officiated as starter, assisted by Lou Sutherland of Westford and Elmer Nutting of this village. The judges who gave the decision were Charles Brooks of Graniteville, Al Gilmore of West Acton and Alfred Drolette of this village. The prizes were offered by the lovers of sport of this village and consisted of a

fine horse blanket, first, pair of quarterboots, second, whip and third.

The success of the meet was due to Fred Sweatt, Elmer Nutting and Alfred Drolette who have exerted untiring efforts in the cause.

Oct 9, 1909

BARN DANCE

The Westford Athletic association gave its annual cherry barn dance last week Friday evening. The hall was crowded with a good-natured, fun loving company. Everybody was self-controllable, so it was wholesome enjoyment to the brim all the while. Certainly something good made everyone look a smile. Even unbelievers in this kind of face would have found it good medicine to shorten up the face. Hibbard's orchestra of Lowell, always grandly lively in tempting feet to move, on this occasion with their new captivating son dance melodies rather led a previous records.

The hall was trimmed for farm scene with pumpkins, donkeys, corn, and other things green. This was the work of taste, skilled by the plainness of young ladies, a hint by a man. There was just enough of the farmer costume sprinkled around individually to the density of the company to give healthy variety. The prize offered for the best costume was awarded to Miss May Balc for ladies and to S. L. Taylor for the other side of the firmament. This last was a speechless surprise, if smiles and bows were not quite enough. Add no a large quantity of unanimous appreciation. Many towns and some cities were represented in the social education in the varied aspects of the evening. Pleasing as the affair was, fun goes, add to seventy dollars for finances as more fun.

Sept 25, 1909

CANED

That gold-headed cane that the Boston Post has been encouraging the old age with a Yankee New England, has found an abiding place in Westford. To the oldest citizen Selectman Oscar R. Spaulding presented the cane to Theodor Horace Hamblett of the Brookside precinct. Although in the nineties, he retains the quick, sharp 'hail, how-do-you-do-type of life,' as well as vigorous hail to health. The vexed question of whether women folks are citizens and eligible to gold-headed canes easily answered, as long as an class of people with chain and ball are handcuffed to the ancient law that physical might makes moral right as long as our civilization is swayed by this law women are not citizens and need not apply for gold-headed canes. We are only half civilized and are afraid to rise the other half.