

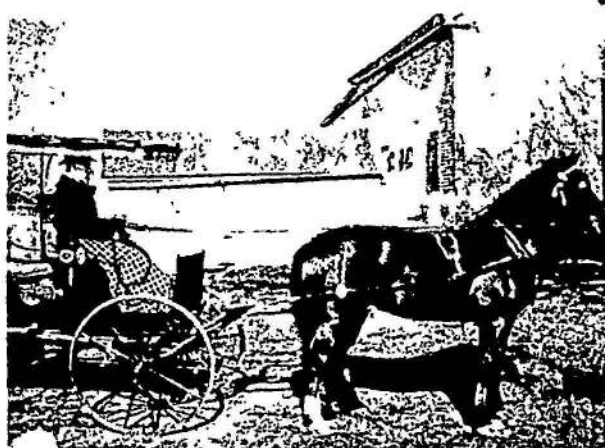
Westford Recollections



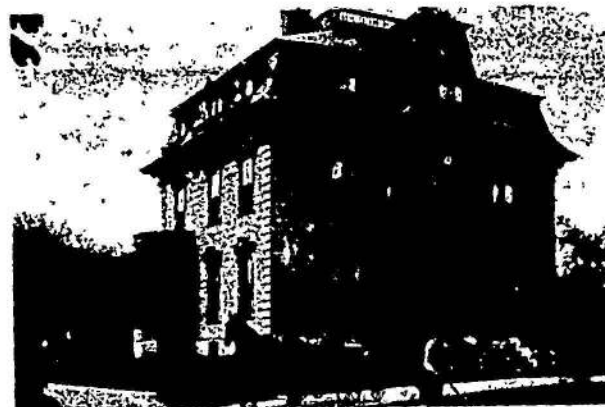
The Blacksmith shop in back of the Congregational Church where the present Westford Center Fire Station stands. To the right is the Harness Shop.



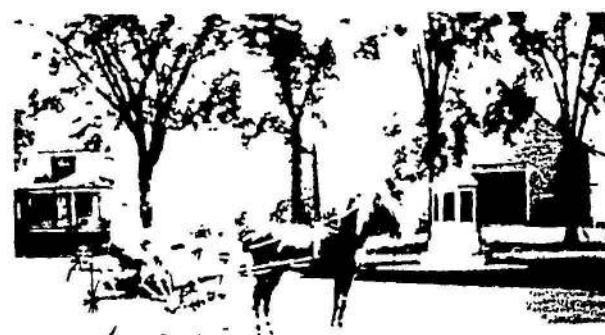
Building stone walls on the Charles L. Hildreth Farm on Hildreth Street about the year 1900.



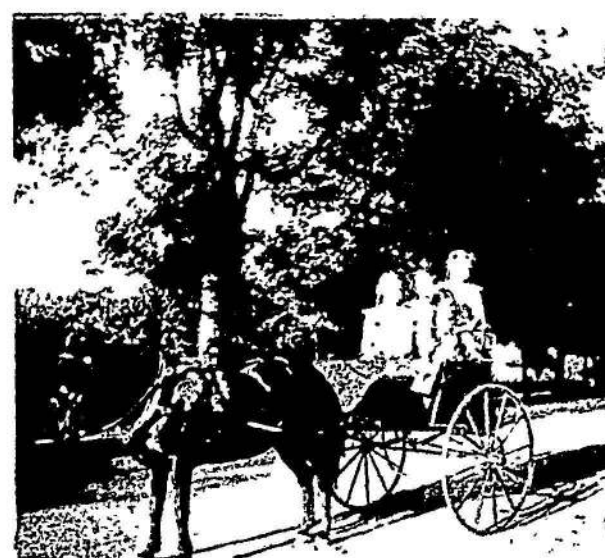
Alexander MacDougall driving his sledge in front of the barn that used to be located on the West side of the First Parish Church.



Mr. MacDougall driving in front of Mr. Abbot's house which stood in back of the present post office in the Center.



Probably the last "driving horse" used for transportation in the town. It carried Mr. Cameron, President of the Abbot Worsted Mill, to and from work, each day



Children and Ponies, always a happy sight. The daughters of Dr. Sleeper and Dr. Draper, about 1900.

by Mrs. Charles S. Kennedy
"Horse and Buggy Days"
as related by Allister MacDougall
As time goes, it was not many years ago when Westford had a large population of horses (for the purpose of transportation, not mere pleasure) While there

were the passenger trains with depots at Brookside, Westford, Graniteville (Stone Quarry Depot) Forge Village, Pine Ridge, Nashoba and Carlisle (located in Westford), these depots also required horse transportation Westford Depot

especially was a busy place in the morning with commuters taking the train to their work in Lowell or Boston.

These horses required blacksmith and wheelwright shops to keep the horses and wagons in repair. Nelson Tuttle had a wheelwright shop on Boston Road (remodeled into a house, and recently occupied by his daughter, Miss Ruth Tuttle until the time of her death last year), and another at Chamberlain Corner, one of the oldest and last operated by Mr. Walkden, Alan Bell's grandfather.

The blacksmith shops were active places as blacksmiths were craftsmen in iron doing all sorts of repair jobs and besides shoeing horses. One of the most active shops was in Westford Center located on the same site as the present Fire Station. The operator of this shop for many years was Mr. Frank Miller, grandfather of Everett Miller of Main St. The picture shows how close the shop was to the rear of the Congregational Church. Frank Miller is the one with his tool box putting the finishing touches on a horseshoe, the horse being named Bess and owned by Julius Cameron and held by Alexander MacDougall. The second horse hitched to the dump cart was owned by Alan Cameron who lived where the Nursing Home is now located. It is driven by William Whitney. Notice the heavy ox cart wheel on the left of the picture and also the round stove on the ground near Frank Healy who used to repair and tighten the tires of wagon wheels. Also notice the pile of discarded horse shoes next to the small door. Inside the door was the forge and anvil - a good attraction to small boys.

The second building in the picture was the harness shop, also a necessary shop to make and repair harnesses. The last operator of this shop was John Feeney.

One of the oldest blacksmith shops was located at Chamberlain Corner, the corner being named for one of the first blacksmiths. The last operator of this shop was Mark Jenkins. Next to it was a wheelwright shop last run by Mr. Walkden.

A third blacksmith shop located at Westford Center, was last operated by George Obrien who lived on Vose Road who walked or drove to his work every day.

Westford had many teams of work horses and one of the pictures shows a team at work with a gang of men building stone walls on the Charles L. Hildreth farm on Hildreth Street. The almost miles of double stone walls built on this farm is a monument to the man who cleared fields and developed one of the most productive farms in Westford. Some of the men in the picture are, starting at the left: Willis Hildreth, Farm Supt., Archie MacDougall, fresh from Scotland and a powerful man, the 4th man is Wyllie Wright who lived in the house now occupied by Charles L. Collins on Wyllie Wright Lane, and the man in front of the team is Pete Clement who lived where Mrs. Joseph Sullivan now lives on Boston Road. Possibly some one may recognize the other men as the picture was taken about 1900.

To show some of the types of driving horses or ponies used in the 1890's to early 1900, one is shown a pair of Morgans hitched to a sledge, driven by Alexander MacDougall and owned by John W. Abbot in front of the barn that formerly stood just west of the Unitarian Church (First Parish Church United). A second picture shows a horse hitched to a single seated carriage, also driven by Alexander MacDougall in front of the house of Mr. Abbot. This house stood just in back of the present Post Office. The tower on the grounds of the Nursing Home now used as tool house, was the base for the water tank and the windmill used to supply the house with running water before Westford had a water company.

The picture taken by the Soldier Monument is one also driven by Mr. MacDougall and shows probably the last driving horse used for transportation and was long used by Mr. Julius Cameron to drive back and forth from Westford to his office in Forge Village where he was president of the Abbot Worsted Mill.

The last picture shows that even in those days the children had their good times and enjoyed their ponies. This pony was one of a pair owned by Julius Cameron, hitched to a two wheel cart and driven by Dorothy Sleeper, daughter of Dr. Sleeper. Beside her is Lillian Draper, the daughter of another of Westford's Doctors. In back is Natalie Sleeper and Ella MacDougall. This picture was taken about 1900.

Now again Westford is interested in horses but purely for pleasure and not as in the old days for necessary travel, the operator of its farms, the transportation of its produce to market or the repair and building of roads.