

Westford Recollections



Miss May E. Day, who was the Librarian at the J. V. Fletcher Library for 42 years. (photo by Ruth)

by Mrs Charles S Kennedy
J V Fletcher Library

We have reason to be grateful to two descendants of the Prescott family in Westford for much of the beautification of our library. Edward M Raymond of Charlestown and Charles Henry Prescott of Still River Mr Raymond was a widower who left no heirs, and Charles H Prescott never married They both gave generously to our library in the line of Art objects such as statuettes, bas-reliefs, busts and pictures all of which enhance the learning atmosphere of the building

Mr Ben Prescott of Westford recalls when he was a boy, Mr Raymond used to visit them out at the farm at Chamberlain Corner He often stayed over night or for the week-end Mr Raymond gave Ben's sister Bertha (who later married Harry Benjamin) 6 teaplates (with a love story pattern) of French china One teaplate each has been handed down to six feminine descendants

Edward M Raymond passed away Sept 6, 1907, probably in Boston, as the city was not mentioned in the records He was 59 or 60 years of age His original will stipulated that the J V Fletcher Library was to receive a \$2000 bequest However, he was so generous during his lifetime, that at the time of his death his estate had been depleted to such an extent that his second cousin, Ebenezer Prescott paid his burial expenses

Another person to whom the J V Fletcher Library is indeed grateful is Miss May E Day (sister-in-law of Mrs Alice Day, present librarian) who served as librarian in Westford for a period of 42 years--1918-1960 It was she who was librarian during the time of the great ice storm of 1921 She reports, and the town report confirms the fact that during the first three weeks of December following the November storm there was no electricity in the Library Consequently a kerosene lamp and a flashlight were borrowed for the evening hours After the end of two weeks another kerosene lamp was borrowed At this time the hours for the

Library were Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday--1 30-5 and 6 30-9 Whereas transportation was not readily available to all, Miss May E Day would fill a satchel with books and go to people''

The Library underwent extensive renovations in 1969 and now bustles with activities such as Children's Story Hours, 'Books Sandwiched IN'--the Photography Club, the Mineral Club, meetings for the Westford Minutemen, the Historical Society and other groups And, of course the Mary Atwood Lectures, free of charge to the town, are highlights on the Library calendar