

Westford Recollections: Nabnasset School No. 7



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by Mrs Charles S Kennedy
Nabnasset School No 7 is owned by the Robert Talbot Family and is located on Oak Hill Road. The Town Report of for the year of 1873 gives the cost of the new school as \$2,000 Mr Harry Ingalls attended this school in 1890 - in fact, on the honor roll for that year for attendance and tardiness four out of five were Ingalls's

Nabnasset Honor Roll

3 terms - Herbert Ingalls
2 terms - Nellie Ingalls
2 terms - Frank Ingalls
2 terms - Harry Ingalls
2 terms - Charlie Trull

The children at the No. 7 school received a good education, for Lizzy Winship (from West Chelmsford) stayed with the school. Usually, as soon as a school had a good teacher, she was put in the Graniteville or Center School where more money was offered. Lizzy Winship remained with Nabnasset, No 7, as she preferred to continue teaching near her home.

When boys reached the age of 15 or 16 many left school to work in the quarry, they weren't required to go on to the Academy - and perhaps they had tired of their teachers and schooling. However, mention was made of a Unitarian Fund to be used for higher education. In the 1873 record \$37.50 for insurance on the schools was placed with G W Coburn & Son, Inc.

The repairs on schoolhouses, and articles furnished in the schools in 1891 reflect the flavor of the times.

Stony Brook School

Paid for dustpan and coal sieve - \$.85

Paid for dipper, brooms and crayons - \$.50

Paid George Drew for lock and painting blackboard \$1.50

Parkerville School

Paid George Drew for repairing clock - \$1.00

Paid George Drew for setting glass & repairing pump - \$1.70

Nabnasset - Oak Hill

Rd School

Paid George Drew for repairing frame and glass \$1.50

The report of 1891 concerning school property reads:

"School property is in as good condition as can be expected. The Janitors exercise care and the school carpenter, George Drew, looks after such details as he is notified of by the committee or teachers. It is the policy of the committee to prevent waste, when possible, by remembering the 'stitch in time'."

In 1891 the town raised \$250 to paint school houses. With this money the school buildings at Graniteville, Forge Village and Westford Center were painted, at an expense of \$211.05.

Also from the 1891 report: "Some of the books have been in use for a long time and will have to be replaced by new ones, but most teachers and pupils have exercised care in the use of books and few have been needlessly injured."

However, in the report of the Treasurer the cost of repairs looked greater than usual and very little had been turned into the treasury in payments for damage. This was due to the fact that new teachers did not realize that the students were expected to pay for all injuries done above the ordinary wear. The rule held teachers responsible for injuries to school property and if pupils didn't pay the amount due for damage the teacher was liable to have it deducted from her wages. Books, as mentioned, were well used. "The committee requires books to be kept covered. Most schools try to be careful, but No 7 still heads the list for neatness and carefulness in the use of books."

The 1891 report lists Nab-

nasset with 23 pupils average attendance 13. "This school is still fortunate to retain Miss L A Winship. Work excellent."

A Teacher's Institute is recorded in the 1891 report, having been held early in the fall in Graniteville. The subjects touched upon were Duties of Teachers, Arithmetic, Geography, History, Physiology & Hygiene, Reading with the Class & Drawing.

Three other towns were invited. There were 60 in attendance, and it was thought to have been interesting and beneficial - evidently the first of its kind offered in Westford. "We ought to have a meeting like this every year so that teachers could hear the principles underlying their work and see their best methods illustrated." The 1893 Town Report says that the Nabnasset School well was dry much of the time, when there was water, it was bad and unfit for use. There were two attempts to put in a new well, but they struck a ledge so the project was abandoned.

1893 Health Report

Disease	Cases	Deaths
Diphtheria	1	0
Measles	15	3
Croup		1
Typhoid		1

In those days the entire family was quarantined, and the houses fumigated. Next week we turn to the little schoolhouse on Groton Rd No 8.