

**FOUR YEARS FARMING; A SNAPSHOT OF RURAL LIFE**  
**(Comments on the Frederick Allen Diary With a Collection of Related Tales)**

**Ramblings of a Forgetful History Buff**  
**Bob Harding**

I write this memo with the uncomfortable sense of embarrassment which comes after missing a scheduled, adequately forewarned, zoom meeting of local historians on Saturday, November 14. The meeting, planned by the Westport Historical Society to discuss the wonderful transcription of the journal of Frederick Allen who lived on Hixbridge road was an innovative approach to continuing the advancement of local historical enthusiasm and knowledge, and appears to have successfully accomplished those goals.

By way of explanation: I had received the invitation to participate and enthusiastically took time to read the transcribed diary which was distributed as a PDF file with the request. I noted to myself that several good friends and history buffs like myself were also on the list to be part of the zoom round table. I also began making notes about what I might contribute to the discussion which included some personal experiences from living on a farm on Main Road in Westport in the 1940s and from having had many deep conversations with a 90 plus year old relative (retired farmer) when I was a teenager in the 1950s and with other older friends.

In addition, I attempted to do an analysis in the form of a frequency record of various activities and expressions used by Frederick Allen in his journal to perhaps provide a fresh approach to summarizing the man's life during the four years of farming life covered by the diary.

Unfortunately I failed to register my intentions with those running the program, got distracted watching the Masters Golf tournament on television and, when checking the invitation a day later for the details, discovered my embarrassing omission.

Given the evidence of my increasing forgetfulness it seem prudent for me to put into writing as a means of preservation, some of the memories I have been carrying around in my mind from the myriad of conversations and encounters I've had with older denizens of Dartmouth, Westport, and environs.

As a means of dealing with my feelings of guilt and loss from missing out, I have decided to also record some of my analyses and a few of the stories I had planned to share with the panel and the zoom audience on Saturday November 14<sup>th</sup>.

One of the first analytical findings regarding the Frederick Allen diary had to do with the **places he mentioned and the frequency of his travel** to them. In terms of frequency they reveal the circumference of his world (other than when he shipped aboard the whaler). It turns out that Frederick got around quite a bit; going to a place called Clayville, designated variously as 'C.Ville'-29 times, Clayville'-14 times, 'C.V.- 5 times, and 'CV'- 1 time for a total

of 49 mentions. This place is not easily recognized but was a former name for what we now call Russells Mills Village. An 1831 'Plan of Dartmouth' done by Henry Crapo and found in the Massachusetts Archives provides us with the documentary evidence supporting this conclusion. A cut from this document is provided below as **Appendix 1** and can be found on the website of the Dartmouth Historical and Arts Society in its 'Map Room'.

Frederick Allen also ventured away from Hixbridge Road to other locales, and in terms of frequencies of mention in his journal besides the 49 mentions of Clayville, we find documented: New Bedford (as 'N. Bedford' or 'New Bedford'), 38 times, The Point (as 'The Point', 'Paquachuck Point' and 'Paquechuck Point') 27 times, the Head of the River 20 times (sometimes on skates!), Fall River 4 times, Smith Mills 2 times, and Fairhaven 1 time.



**Charles H. 'Pop' Sisson and the author, 1953**



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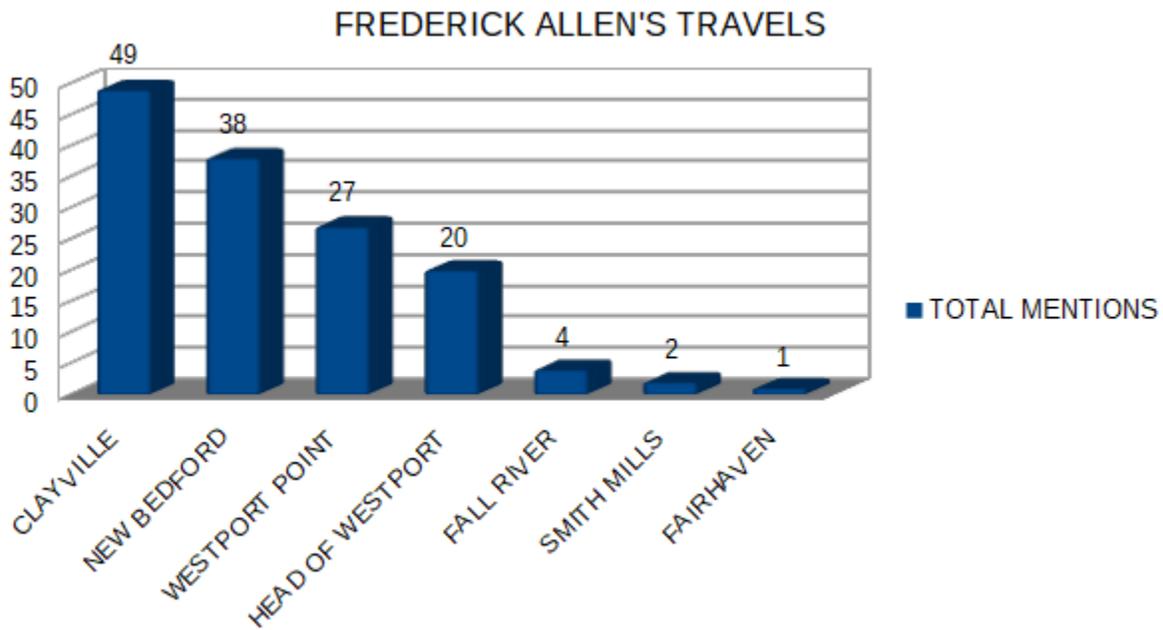
Another analytical derivation from Frederick Allen's journal was a close look at the various activities he documented as utilizing his time and attention. A frequently used term was '**drawed**' and it was commonly associated with a wide variety of materials and items which inform us about the distribution of Frederick's laboring hours. Noting that the diary makes it clear that the source of power he used was either a horse or a pair of oxen we note that Frederick spent many hours with harnesses in his hands and probably thrown over his shoulders pulling and transporting bulky and heavy loads from place to place. Using the sparse words of the journal and counting over the four years of entries we can get a good overview of the relative distribution of his work hours.

In terms of relative frequency we find the following: (1) The term '*drawed*' was used 191 times in the four years (about 48 times per year); (2) '*drawed wood*' 62/191(32.5%); (3) '*drawed stone*' 28/191(14.7%) (4) '*drawed seaweed*' 15/191(7.8%); These top three accumulating to over half of all times the word '*drawed*' was mentioned in the diary in the four years of entries. On the other hand, there were 26 other items or substances transported using either the oxen or the horses. The table inserted below gives the details of this summary.

**FREQUENCY TABLE OF NUMBER OF TIMES 'DRAWED'  
(TRANSPORTED) IS MENTIONED**

<b>RANK</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	<b>TOTAL MENTIONS</b>	<b>% OF TOTAL</b>	<b>CUMULATIVE %</b>
	drawed	191	100.00%	
1	drawed wood	62	32.46%	32.46%
2	drawed stones	28	14.66%	47.12%
3	drawed seaweed	15	7.85%	54.97%
4	drawed dirt	13	6.81%	61.78%
5	drawed manure	9	4.71%	66.49%
6	drawed hay	7	3.66%	70.16%
7	drawed mud	7	3.66%	73.82%
8	drawed corn	5	2.62%	76.44%
9	drawed lumber	5	2.62%	79.06%
10	drawed fish	4	2.09%	81.15%
11	drawed timber	4	2.09%	83.25%
12	drawed brick	3	1.57%	84.82%
13	drawed oats	3	1.57%	86.39%
14	drawed rails	3	1.57%	87.96%
15	drawed sand	3	1.57%	89.53%
16	drawed small stones	3	1.57%	91.10%
17	drawed stalks	3	1.57%	92.67%
18	drawed my boat	2	1.05%	93.72%
19	drawed shingles	2	1.05%	94.76%
20	drawed boards	1	0.52%	95.29%
21	drawed bags (corn)	1	0.52%	95.81%
22	drawed cabbages	1	0.52%	96.34%
23	drawed lime	1	0.52%	96.86%
24	drawed pumkins	1	0.52%	97.38%
25	drawed rocks	1	0.52%	97.91%
26	drawed salt hay	1	0.52%	98.43%
27	drawed stage poles	1	0.52%	98.95%
28	drawed straw	1	0.52%	99.48%
29	drawed turnips	1	0.52%	100.00%

**USING EITHER OXEN OR HORSES**



TRAVELS OF FREDERICK ALLEN  
The Circumference of his World

RANK	DESCRIPTION	TOTAL MENTIONS	% OF TOTAL	CUMULATIVE %	YEARLY AV MENTIONS
1	CLAYVILLE	49	34.75%	34.75%	12.25
2	NEW BEDFORD	38	26.95%	61.70%	9.50
3	WESTPORT POINT	27	19.15%	80.85%	6.75
4	HEAD OF WESTPORT	20	14.18%	95.04%	5.00
5	FALL RIVER	4	2.84%	97.87%	1.00
6	SMITH MILLS	2	1.42%	99.29%	0.50
7	FAIRHAVEN	1	0.71%	100.00%	0.25
	TOTAL EXCURSIONS	141			35.25

It is clear from the journal that a common recreation for Frederick was 'swapping'. This activity spanned both the farming and the whaling years and is mentioned 18 times in the diary. Items were 'swaped' 16 times, and 'swapped' 2 times, and 'changed' 1 time in the whole diary. Some of the swaps were done by 'Pa' (4) but all the others were Frederick's with a variety of others involved on the other end of the swap. The most common items swapped were knives, shoes and animals ('Pa' usually did animals). It is notable that the swaps were not always 'simple' this for that. In fact, quite frequently they were more complex, let me

quote a few examples: “. . .*Swaped knives with A. Lawrence, gave 24 cents to boot.* “ (August 26, 1833); ‘. . .*Swaped powder horns with J. Fisher & had geography 25¢.*’ (September 27, 1834); ‘. . .*Swaped a book for a box and gave 5 cts* “ (June 30, 1837). It is remarkable to me that these records coincide so well with tales I heard from some of the older men I interrogated at length when I was a teenager talking with what seemed to me to be ‘ancient’ men in the family and at places I worked. (In fact, only one was over ninety (David Grew) and the others were in their seventies and eighties, (Simeon Hawes and Charles H. ‘Pop’ Sisson).)

Their stories emphasized that it was quite common for knives to be the objects involved in trades or ‘swaps’, most often jackknives but sometimes ‘hunting knives’. I was told that the common circumstance was during a ‘hot stove’ gathering, such as around a stove at Davoll’s store, or any such gathering place where men congregated and visited and told stories and shared gossip, that trades would be initiated.

The practice, I was informed, often started out with one who wanted to make an offer privately writing his offer on a hidden writing surface and verbally calling attention to the fact that he had an offer. It would only be shared with the ‘swappor’ and the ‘swapee’ would be invited to view the bid in private, sort of like showing someone the cards you were holding. The first bid might be simple; ‘my jackknife for yours’. The ‘swapee’ would respond, writing on the same surface, ‘plus 5 cents to boot’; and it could go on and on, privately. Sort of like a ‘blind auction’.

If no deal was struck, enough interest might have been aroused that someone else might either make an offer to swap something else, but without knowing the prior negotiations. I was told this was very common among gatherings of young and older men in this region and often went on and on for hours and might even continue from one day until the next.

**Ramblings of a Forgetful History Buff**  
**Bob Harding, (continued)**  
**Other Stories of the 'Old Times'**

Regarding farming around the Southcoast I have some memories from personal experience and from carefully grilling older men when I (an 85 year old) was a boy listening and learning from older relatives and friends. One of several of these sources was in his 90s when I was barely out of my teens and he shared many curious and memorable farm related tales with me. I will share some of these and others that I believe are appropriate for sharing.

In the 1940's our family moved to an old farmhouse on Main Road in Westport, owned by Albert Lees Sr. My father had been hired as a resident farm hand by Mr. Lees and our new home was on a property which was also home to two work horses (Dan and Babe), a Shetland pony (Molly), a young billy goat (Billy), two pigs under the barn, a flock of bantam chickens and a batch of white fantailed tumbling pigeons. We had a well with an old oaken bucket and a reel to raise and lower it. Also we had a 'two-hole' outhouse and a barn.

As a five year old boy moving here from the inner city of New Bedford I began an early introduction to the practices and folkways of farming in that time and place.

**Treatment of chilblains, an affliction of workhorses**

One particular experience has remained with me these 80 years and it had to do with the horses. It was not an uncommon happening that in cold working weather workhorses would develop a condition in their ankles (just above their hooves, usually called their 'fetlocks') that was called by farmers I have known, and especially my Dad, "chilblains". When this happened the horses became lame and uncomfortable and it was important to heal them since they were essential as 'draft animals' in the work of 'drawing' loads of cord wood from the wood lots where Dad felled the trees, cut them to length and stacked them on wooden skids to be drawn back to the barnyard. Note that these activities were also frequently mentioned in the Frederick Allen journal. "Chilblains" is the same term used for similar afflictions that people also suffered from in cold working weather or other outdoor occasions exposed to cold.

Dad's normal management of this problem was memorable and, to my mind (at the time) strange, until I learned later that it was really an old folk custom familiar to farmers for generations. The treatment was to apply human urine to the chilblains on the horses ankles. In our case this was accomplished by utilizing the two young boys in the family, me age 5 and my brother Earle, aged 10.

We were biologically able at that age to accurately apply the treatment from a safe distance from the horses hooves where they were tethered in the barn and that we did every morning for a week or more. They did heal as a result of this treatment!! Later in time, after I was in my 70s and attending Norma Judson's historical group gatherings at her home in Westport

along with other history buffs, I related this story to the group and two older attendees attested to their own personal knowledge of this practice. The two were 'Cukie' Macomber and Dana Reed.

Later, in the time of Google and search engines, a little research uncovers the fact that chilblains in animals and in humans have often been treated with human urine as well as with other 'folk medicine' approaches including various herbal and sometimes strange substances.

I will quote a few notable treatments from the British Isles, likely a source of our New England folkways.

(Link: <https://www.plant-lore.com/plantofthemonth/remedies-for-chilblains/>)

Chilblains are a winter affliction still remembered by many older people. Small, painful itchy swellings appeared and persisted on the toes, fingers and ears. The most widespread treatment seems to have been immersing the affected part in **urine**, but a number of herbal remedies have also been recorded:

**Apple** (*Malus pumila*) – Thoroughly rotten apples were threaded onto chilblained toes to cool the burning and the itching [Lisburn, Co. Antrim, March 1986].

**Carrot** (*Daucus carota*) – I was born in 1930, and, as a young girl I used to suffer from chilblains on my little toes – living in Scotland and having only coal fires for heating did not help them. My mother's remedy was to grate carrots into lard, and put this on as a poultice. The remedy worked, but it did ruin one's slippers! [Gosport, Hampshire, January 1997]

**Onion** (*Allium cepa*) – For chilblains: rub feet with half a peeled onion [Llanuwchylln, Gwynedd, April 1991].

**Potato** (*Solanum tuberosum*) – Last year was the first time I had chilblains severely, but my father heard of a cure for them. The water in which the potatoes for dinner were boiled was poured into a basin. I soaked my feet in it for half an hour for three consecutive days, every night for three times and in a short time the chilblain will be cured [*ibid.* 790: 34, Mudhuddart, Co. Dublin].

**Ramblings of a Forgetful History Buff**  
**Bob Harding** (continued)

**Embarrassing a Country-Boy**

From the late 1940s for more than twenty years I worked at the Paskamansett Golf Course in Smith Mills Village of Dartmouth for Simeon B. Hawes, manager for the owners, the Sylvanus T. Hawes Estate, Inc. My work included both 'inside the clubhouse' and the 'greens crew' roles and of course I became closely acquainted with Mr. Hawes and others working at the club. Mr. Hawes was an older man, (born 1887) and from him and from a co-worker, Charles H. 'Pop' Sisson (born 1877) I garnered lots of good stories about old times in the area.

One of the most memorable came from 'Pop' who grew up in Fairhaven, had an older brother Frank who also played golf and they liked to talk about their boyhood days. It turns out that Charles and Frank, when they were young teenagers used to walk to their grandfather's house and stay there for a few days visit.

Sounds like normal thing to do until it is learned that the walk was from Fairhaven to the Head of Westport where their grandfather Sisson lived. The Sisson family has been at the Head of Westport for many generations back to the late 1600s. (Richard Sisson settled there in 1671).

'Pop' told many many stories which are unforgettable. After he retired he came to the club every day, sat in a rocking chair in the Clubhouse where I worked, did a cross word puzzle from the Boston Record American and every day, rooted for the Red Sox as their games were broadcast over the radio; and against the Yankees whenever there was no Red Sox game.

And, as we visited he often related stories of the 'old days' and the 'old ways' in response to my many questions. Unfortunately, many of his responses must stay in my memory and cannot be shared, they were quite often a little shocking and sometimes surprising but not what I can repeat here. One special story I believe I **can** share had to do with what 'Pop' told me about being extremely embarrassed once on a visit to Westport when he was a teenager. Let me relate that tale.

It seems that 'Pop's' grandfather , after some begging, allowed him to use his prize pacer and a shay to take a young attractive Westport lass for a jaunt along the country roads. 'Pop' said the girl was very attractive and bewitching to him, a teenage boy, and he was thrilled his grandfather trusted him with the horse and carriage. He planned to spend some enjoyable time alone with the girl as they toured the back roads of beautiful rural Westport.

With the pretty teenager beside him young Charles, proudly driving his grandfather's shay, proceeded out of the barnyard at the Head and as soon as the horse started down Drift Road it commenced to display a bad case of flatulence! I am cleaning up some of 'Pop's words for this telling but, he related to me that the horse never stopped making the noises associated with that condition and that he turned 'totally crimson' with embarrassment sitting beside the

girl he was trying to impress. On top of that, the horse decided to unload its lower bowels, dropping 'horse buns' as it pranced down Drift Road.

Needless to say, after telling his grandfather how things went after he returned the horse and shay on coming back from taking the young lady to her home, 'Pop' was told the horse must have eaten too many apples from the orchard the morning before the jaunt.

'Pop's admonition ever after was to keep the horses away from the apples before taking your girlfriend for a ride.

**Ramblings of a Forgetful History Buff**  
**Bob Harding** (continued)  
**Accidents in the Woods**

Another tale I have retained from those discussions comes from a talk with Simeon Hawes, mentioned above. Simeon was one of several sons of Sylvanus T. Hawes who owned and operated a water powered sawmill on the Paskamansett River in Smith Mills, North Dartmouth.

He told about his younger days when he and his brothers were engaged in cutting down designated trees in a woodlot on the North side of what is now Old Westport Road, West of Cross Road, in the vicinity of the Philip Cummings house. (The opposite side of the road). It was customary for a crew to move into one of these woodlots, fell and trim the trees being harvested, and using teams of work horses, to draw the logs out to a staging area for further organization and for drawing down to Smith Mills and the sawmill for cutting into lumber. This activity appears to mirror Frederick Allen's diary in my visualizing of Simeon's narrative.

However, the rest of the details were unique to Mr. Hawes's experience. He told me that during this particular project a pair of horses "got into a large hornets nest in the swamp" and the disturbed hornets attacked the horses (who were harnessed to a heavy load of logs) and the end result of the multiple stings ended with no other choice than destroying the horses and burying them in the swamp where they had been working. They were swollen and in agony from the collective venom injected by the hornets. A great and sad loss for the teenage brothers to endure and one Simeon remembered when he was an old man!

**Ramblings of a Forgetful History Buff**  
**Bob Harding** (continued)  
**"Balky" Horse Stories**

In the Frederick Allen diary he mentions on October 24<sup>th</sup> 1834 that he put the horse in with the oxen when he was drawing seaweed off Cadman's Neck and the horse was '**unruly**'.

On August 20<sup>th</sup> 1836 his entry: . . ." AM went to L. Gifford's, came home & had a frolic whipping the horse to make him goe in the wagon. In 1½ hours he thought best to goe. . ."

Reading these notes of Frederick's brought to my mind the many stories I had heard from my conversations with Simeon Hawes and with David Grew when I was a curious teenager. As they were related to me the reference was always to the terminology '**balky horses**'. It appears to me that Frederick's horse belongs in that category. I have mentioned Mr. Hawes above but should introduce David Grew to the readers before going on.

David Grew was the third generation of that same name and was raised on a farm on the north side of Hathaway Road just west of Shawmut Avenue in rural New Bedford. His father, a small-in-stature man, married a large raw-boned woman of Irish extraction who bore him several children, among them David and several brothers all big burly men taking after their mother physically. The older David Grew was an itinerant butcher who serviced his neighbors needs either by going to their farms where his boys would have the task of wresting the pigs from under the barns or from wherever the pig stys were located, or the neighbors would bring the animals to be butchered to the farm on Hathaway Road.



DAVID GREW, ITINERANT BUTCHER WITH GROWN FAMILY  
WIFE, 5 SONS & 2 DAUGHTERS  
SON DAVID, MIDDLE BACK, & JOHN RIGHT BACK

In any event the utilization of horses both on the farm and in the butchering activities exposed David and his brothers to memorable occurrences with the rare but notable 'balky horse'.

It is worth noting that to be really effective men and horses needed to work together and a willful, **unruly**, or **balky horse** created difficulties and hindrances to productivity. Also, my sources always explained that it was a rare happening to find a 'balky' horse. The actions taken to deal with one always came across to me as extreme attempts to exert the man's will over the horses will. Sometimes that failed completely and resulted in extreme actions. Let me relate some such as told to me back in those days of curious inquiry of my old friends David Grew and Simeon Hawes.

First, a tale told by David Grew. Near the Grew farm on Hathaway road, heading West toward the intersection with Rockdale Avenue (formerly called Noel Taber Road) there was a steep incline. This is close to where, in this modern time, the water storage tank is located on what once was the second hole of the New Bedford Public Links, aka Elmwood, aka Whaling City Golf Course. Mr. Grew told me that his older brother, John Grew (a big rugged man who once worked as a 'bouncer' in a local pub) when he was a younger man and at work drawing cord wood up the Hathaway Road hill utilizing a horse-drawn wagon, he found out he was dealing with a 'balky horse'.

The horse stopped half way up the hill and despite the usual encouragements from John Grew, refused to move. According to his brother David, John got increasingly angry and tried every trick in the book to motivate the horse to move. He eventually even tried being 'patient' by leaving the horse hooked to the wagon, right where it stopped, and going home to eat lunch before coming back to try again. Finally, after many hours of trying and failing, John Grew, son of the itinerant slaughterer and butcher, at the end of his wits, using a log from the load in the wagon, struck the horse dead with one stroke. Then he went to the barn and lead another horse to the scene and hauled the destroyed 'balky' beast on a skid back to the barn where it was butchered and its remains served as food for the family pack of hound dogs. Later, he hooked a docile horse to the load of logs and proceeded to deliver them to their original destination, further West on Hathaway Road.

**Ramblings of a Forgetful History Buff**  
**Bob Harding** (continued)  
**Drawing a Load of Gravel**

Simeon Hawes related another 'balky horse' story about an event on the S. T. Hawes farm at Smith Mills, Dartmouth which later became the Paskamansett Links. As some may recall there was a large farmhouse and big barn located up a lane connected to route 6, near what later became the course's eighth green and fourth tee. The barn was huge and cavernous and had a space underneath it which was accessible via an inclined entrance. There was a considerable space for storing material and keeping it dry under the barn and it was often utilized in that way.

One such time when a load of 'gravel' had been stored there for use in building drains in the fields (or fairways) the work crew prepared to take a tip cart load from under the barn to the site where a drain was being installed. This meant backing the horse drawn vehicle down the incline into the under-barn space, loading it with gravel (a heavy load), and then exiting the barn with the load.

Once the horse started up the incline and felt the weight in the cart he stopped pulling and remained motionless despite prodding and encouraging. He became thus a 'balky horse'. Horses were of less value if they did not do the work for which they were acquired and farmers usually wanted to train them to be obedient and pliable. Hence when a situation happened the owners primarily wanted it to be a 'teaching opportunity' so they could improve their valuable asset. This is why they used so many different approaches to convincing the animal to change its ways and to comply with the program!

In this case, Simeon explained some of the attempts made. Among them were: application of the standard whip to the horse's flanks; placing hay up the incline enough that to reach it the horse would have to move the load a few feet; giving the horse time to think it over while unfed and still harnessed to the load; and more extreme, lighting a small fire under the horse's belly.

I do not recall which, if any of these methods succeeded or how long before this particular horse ended up at the horse auction for dog meat but I do remember hearing the tale.

**Ramblings of a Forgetful History Buff**  
**Bob Harding** (continued)  
**Feeding the Dogs, Yankee Style**

Another memorable tale came originally from David Grew (3<sup>rd</sup> of that name) who married a recent Danish immigrant girl, Jensine Bangsgaard in 1902. Living, at the time he was married, on the farm on Hathaway Road near Shawmut Avenue, this 21 year old young man owned a pack of hound dogs. He explained to me that his new bride was not too keen on this but that he did his best to be sure they were not a burden for the young couple. Being the son of and the assistant to the local itinerant butcher provided him with some useful experiences to deal with these issues.

There were eighteen dogs, a mix of beagles and coon dogs, and they were active and hungry and consumed lots of food. David explained his solution. It was common in those days in the towns of Old Dartmouth to dispose of old worn out 'plug' work horses, after they had served their time pulling various conveyances and farm equipment for several years, at public auctions where they would go to the highest bidder to be used for 'light duty' or slaughtered for their hide, and their flesh utilized. If slaughtered, the horses' hides were used for sporting equipment and other leather goods. The meat and entrails were used in dog food and fertilizers. Although it was legal to sell horse meat for human consumption in the United States, most of it was used in dog food.

David explained to me in his own lingo that he 'callyed' (archaic shorthand for 'calculated') to feed the dogs without it costing any money. He told me he would attend a horse auction and never pay more than one dollar for an old worn out plug workhorse. After he got the horse home to Hathaway road he would put some apples in a 'firkin' (old term for a small wooden vessel holding about 9 gallons) and lead the horse to 'the back field'. Here after allowing the horse to enjoy some of the apples he would strike it appropriately on the head with the back end of an ax. His explanation of the horse's reaction to the blow I clearly remember; he said it flipped onto its back with its feet up in the air. He then proceeded to skin it and to cut up the carcass to be fed to his dogs. Then he could sell the hide (after proper preparation) for \$1.50, thus making a profit and feeding his dog pack for a period of time.

**Ramblings of a Forgetful History Buff**  
**Bob Harding** (continued)  
**Right Way and Wrong Way Tales**

Working with Mr. Hawes was a significant learning experience for me and several other young men who worked either in the golf shop or on course's greens keeping crew. I remember being taught how to 'whip' a golf club by him, using waxed twine and shellac to protect the hosel's of woods from splitting. 'Whipping' was a strong waxed thread wrapped around the hosel area, about an inch above and below where the hosel of the club head and the shaft joined. While it looked relatively easy to do it took some effort to get it exactly right and it always amazed me at the the skill set which Mr. Hawes exhibited. (These days most driving clubs are no longer made of wood, so this is a lost art). Other than this however, the experience which correlates with Frederick Allen and his diary had to do with a ledge of rock which was exposed in the trap in the back of the 6<sup>th</sup> green, near the clubhouse.

**Breaking Ledge with Sledge Hammer**

One of Simeon Hawes's responsibilities as the course manager was the supervision of the greens keeping crew which of course, had many routine duties which were repetitive and happened on a predictable basis. This included mowing the fairways, the greens, and the rough regularly as the growth of the grass necessitated. Likewise, 'poling' the greens was on a daily schedule as was raking the traps.

However, the crew (the size of which varied a little but was always at least four) worked eight hours per day and needed to be kept busy when the routine work was completed. For this reason Mr. Hawes needed to plan various 'special projects' to be assigned to be worked on after the ordinary work was done. These would be completed as the season went on and would make special improvements to the course and the clubhouse and might include installing a blind drain in some damp section of the first fairway, thinning out the brush between the back tee and the beginning of the fairway on the third hole, painting the ceilings in the men's locker room, etc etc.

Usually, by the late dog days of summer he had to get more creative to come up with projects for the crew's attention. One such hot and sweltering day late in August he decided we would solve a problem that existed in the large sand trap in the back of the sixth green. This was the green very close to the clubhouse on the only par-5 at Paskamansett Links, which was a dogleg, and came down along the wall on Faunce Corner Road.

Ever since the course had been built in the 1930's there had been an obstruction protruding into that trap in the form of a substantial piece of rock, you could call a piece of ledge. It was on the side of the trap closest to the green and not only obstructed the golfers who ended up in the trap but those of us who raked it every day since we had to rake around it. Plus it was a visual impediment in an otherwise good-looking golf vista, clearly visible from the clubhouse, where people congregated.

Mr. Hawes prepared us for this project by having us load up the tip cart, drawn by the Worthington Tractor, from the barn, with the appropriate tools. These included several large sledge hammers, crow bars, and shovels. On arrival down at the sixth green after driving down from the barn he described to us the major steps to be followed. First, using the sledge hammers we were to chip off pieces of the ledge, dig them out of the trap, and load the pieces into the tip cart. Then we were to smooth out the trap and rake it after moving around enough of the sand to fill in the space the ledge had taken.

It seemed like a straight forward plan and as there were four of us there to share the labor we set to work and Mr. Hawes went across the brook and into the clubhouse to check on the morning's greens fees and receipts. The crew consisted of two high school aged classmates, me and Gilbert Fauteux, and two young men, out of high school but only in their late teens or early twenties; one I remember only as 'Deuce' and the other was named Sisson, but I do not recall his first name.

What I remember the most about this project was my surprise at how difficult it was to get it done. Try as we might, swinging these heavy sledge hammers time after time laying heavy blows on that piece of ledge we only managed to chip off tiny chips. We each took turns in succession and in the high heat and humidity we were drenched in sweat.

On top of that as golfers came by the sixth hole and watched and commented we got more and more uncomfortable with our lack of progress; you could say embarrassed. Plus, every time the sand was disturbed either by our hammering or the golfers hitting trap shots, the dust stuck to our sweaty bodies since by now we were stripped to the waist. We also drew spectators who gathered on the porch of the clubhouse and observed our frustration!!

Finally, after what seemed to us like hours of effort but was probably only an hour or so, Mr. Hawes came back out from the clubhouse to check on our progress. He was a soft-spoken gentle man and listened to us explain that in spite of our best efforts little progress had been made. We continued, with him watching, delivering successive heavy blows to the ledge only to see the hammers bounce off with little effect.

With that he told us to stop, took off his felt hat (which he always wore), used it to brush away the few little chips and sand on the surface of the piece of ledge, asked for a sledge hammer took a swing and split the ledge into two pieces. This was a man in his seventies dressed in a shirt and tie and a felt fedora; and he had four lusty young men standing with their mouths open.

From this we learned there was a 'right way' and a 'wrong way' even when breaking up a piece of ledge and we gained even more respect for the wisdom of older men with experience and know-how. Muscles and strength need to be used with intelligence!