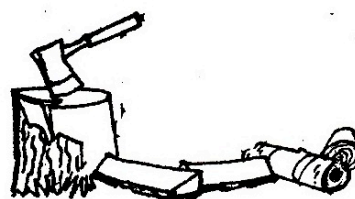
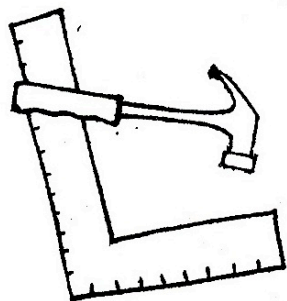
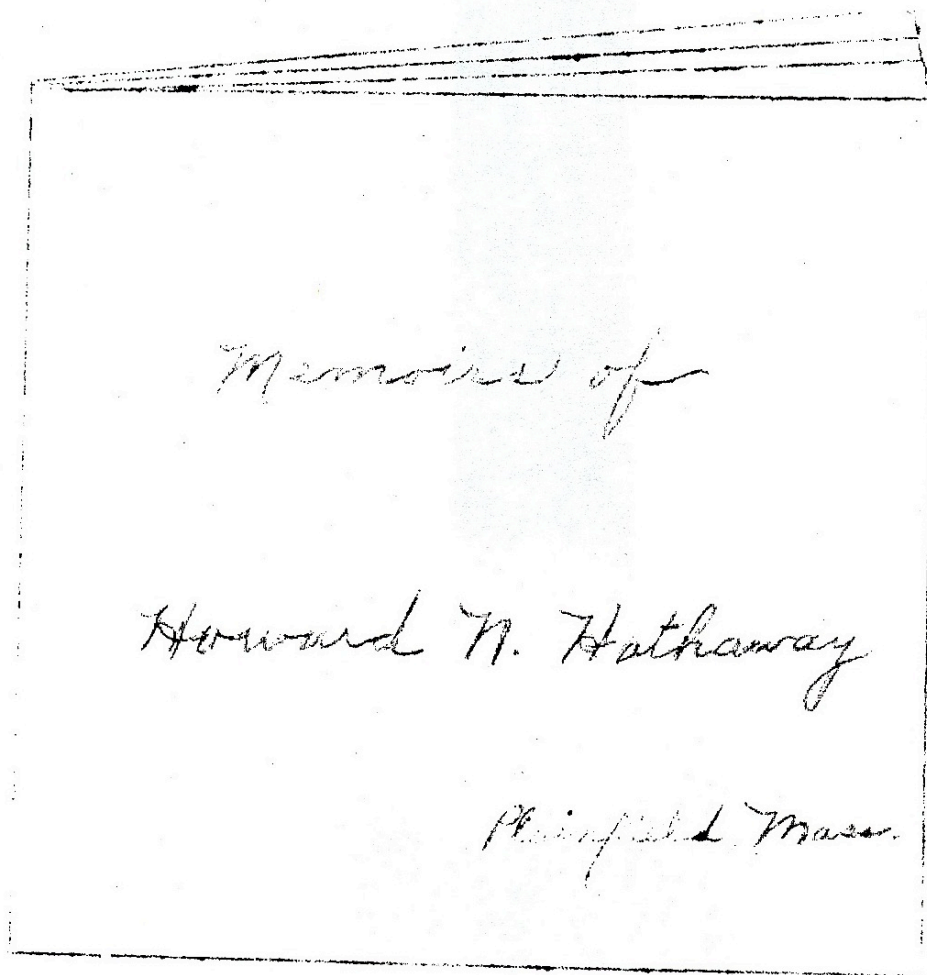
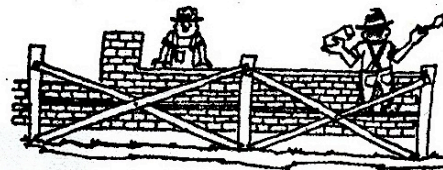


Memoirs of Howard N. Hathaway

Plainfield, Mass



Plainfield, December 23, 1970¹

Sometimes when I am working alone or am shut in on a stormy day, I get to thinking about things that happened from the time I was a small kid up to the present.

The first difficulty I remember getting into was when I traded a new pair of shoes for an old pair of leather boots because they had copper plates on the toes. I was four years old at that time, the boots were two sizes too big and nearly worn out but I had always wanted a pair with copper toes.

The deal fell through as my mother made me trade back.

That was a pretty fair example of my business ability as I have made several equally brilliant deals since.

My next stunt was to find a bottle of whiskey in a cupboard and get plastered.

ed, my mother found me there, out like a light and thought it would kill me but my father thought it was a joke until he found I had spilled some and then he wanted to spank me. A rather crowded life of crime for that age.

We lived in Dalton but my father got the urge to farm so we moved to a farm in Windsor, the farm was known as the Clubfarm, owned by some doctors, lawyers and business men from Pittsfield and Dalton.

My only memorable incident while we lived there (one year) was to get in the pen with a three year old bull that wasn't considered friendly when my mother found me there rubbing the bull's face she naturally was scared but she had presence of mind enough to stay back and tell me she was making doughnuts which was the right bait. The bull didn't seem to resent me, I suppose because we were so near the same age.

¹ From the original in Shaw Memorial Library, Plainfield, MA. Scanned into text and corrected by Pleun Bouricius for the Plainfield Historical Society, 7/7/2007.

We moved to Lanesboro next where I started school with two other boys my age (5). One of the other boys and I were tied for the dumbest kids in school but he won as he had a good looking older sister and we had a man teacher. The next teacher gave me some roses to color and I colored them blue, she first thought I was being fresh but finally settled for 'color blind.

It didn't prove to be serious as I have never been seen with a colored girl. (I hope) It was a good school and I did well there. It was a graded school with good teachers, and not over crowded so the teachers had time for the individual scholars.

We were there five years and then came to Plainfield. I was ten at that time. My Father was a hard working man and worked anyone around him. He said four or five hours sleep was enough for an adult. A kid should have six or seven so I never had a chance to get bed sores. We lived the first farm on West Hill which he had bought and mostly paid for by cutting the timber on the farm for Willcuts mill and logging other lots for Willcut. He also had a dairy which left me with quite a lot of barn chores to do before I went to school. I was supposed to get home directly after school which kept until 4 P.M. as there were still more chores. We had long winter vacations then so my Father bought me a light axe and to pass the time away had me cut brush and small trees out of the log roads. I was at the old age of eleven then.

I didn't get to make the acquaintance of a cross-cut saw until I was twelve and it was painful. When you stand at a tree that is from two or three feet through on a cold winter day for 1/2 hour or longer it would feel as though your feet were frozen and all the romance was lost about logging. We were logging a lot where Clayton Nyes Father lived and Clayton lives now. The logs were cut and

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piled before the snow came. Some of the piles were drawn, all done with horses and the next morning my Father left me to shovel the snow off the next pile while he was gone to the mill.

There were two piles end to end so I had to throw the snow about 16 ft. and it was about 2 ft. deep. After awhile I thought I was tired, so I went down to see Clayton and get warm. Time went faster there than it did shoveling, and my Father had made the trip and had got back to the woods and didn't find enough logs cleaned for a load so he came down for me in no pleasant frame of mind and he had a horsewhip that he seldom used on the horses but felt different about me, but I could outrun him and snow was flying when he got there. The next time he left I stayed.

In the spring it was sugaring First, my father made a hand sled for me to scatter buckets around to the trees before the sap roads were plowed. The camp was mostly downhill from the sugar house where the buckets were kept which was lucky for me. The sled was large enough so that in later years I put a body on it and made a pony sled that later three of my children used to go to school with it driving a Shetland pony. The school was in the Town Hall at that time. That sled sort of got me off the track. After sugaring the spring farm work started. I was too light to plow so got elected to pick stones on land plowed the previous year. After it was plowed I got to pick them again. I got so sick of stones I swore when I got big enough to refuse I would never touch a stone that was too big to shoot in a sling shot. I have been building stone walls for over fifty years since. That is making a liar out of yourself the hard way.

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My Father would get a horse that someone couldn't work and after a spell of persuading would usually have a good tough work horse. If they are worked seven days a week they don't get much time to get back their old habits. We lived on top of that steep hill and Sunday didn't get up there very often. When I was

13 I thought I was big enough to plow but the idea didn't take with my Father, he didn't like to pick stones either. One day one horse got the idea every time they got to the end of the furrow headed for the barn one horse would try to take off. My Father got tired of that and sent me to get the whip. When I got back he said, "You have been wanting to plow, take hold". Every time he told the horse he didn't want to plow that way he would emphasize it with the whip and the horse would jump about 4 ft. and so would the plow and I. Picking stones didn't seem so bad after that session. The next spring just before time to plow, a horse knocked my Father down and stepped on the calf of his leg, split the calf open, grounded him for about a month so I got to do the plowing and it was one thing I could do good. From that on while I was home I did the plowing. It was a pretty dull life on that farm seven long days a week. I began to wish I could have stayed in school but when I was going I wanted to get out and be a man.

At that time there was no graduation. You went until you were old enough to quit (14) or attended winter sessions after. Sometimes in the winter there would be 20 or more scholars of all ages from 5 years old to 18 or 19 and only one teacher, usually a man. Most of the older ones came to learn so there was very

little trouble from them. With that range of ages it didn't leave much time for each class, and as there were no grades you recited in whatever class you happened to be the best in. I started school here at the age of 10 and coming from a more advanced school, run under different conditions I found myself scattered in classes all over the school. The last two or three years the over 14 yr. pupils went to Ashfield Academy if at all. The last 3 yrs. I went they were unfortunate in teachers, most of the teachers were young, first year girls with too many scholars and not enough discipline. They were also handicapped by a nearby resident where most of them boarded. She used to warn them about certain boys that were trouble makers so that some of us had 3 strikes on us before she ever saw us. At that time in this there was a certain element that unless 3 or 4 generations of your family had lived in town you were considered foreigners and as I was a late comer I was in that class and had to be treated as such. Even for one with my retiring disposition, I couldn't help but resent that. There was another boy that was really as nice a boy as I have ever known that this same busy body classified with me so he got the same cold shoulder from a new teacher I did and unless the teacher had the good sense to form her own opinion we got blamed for about everything which didn't help our behavior. The last year I went to school as I would be 14 yrs.

old in the fall (Sept. 16) we had an older teacher, a Miss Howe from down near the Cape Cod.

She was a nice person and was nice to me. I was one of the older boys of course and could persuade the others to go along with me so she had a pretty good school. She was well liked.

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The last day I went was on a Saturday that we had to go to make up for some lost time and I was glad because it was only 1/2 day closing school.

There was a ball game which I wouldn't have got to see if I had been home working.

Some of the kids got to acting up and the teacher said we would stay the whole day. That didn't suit me as I didn't get to see a ball game very often, too much work to be done. I had the job of cleaning blackboards, being one of the tallest boys, had to go into the woodshed to clean erasers so while there I pulled up two loose boards. I had to wash the blackboards with a large sponge and a pail of water. After I had emptied the pail I discovered I hadn't squeezed the sponge dry and didn't want to go out to do that and couldn't leave the wet sponge in the pail so I put it under the pillow the teacher had on the seat of her chair.

It would have been o.k. if she hadn't sat down, but she didn't sit very long before she got restless and when she stood up with her back to the kids there was a large dark spot showing. I thought it was time to go to the ball game so I left by way of the wood shed floor.

I wasn't proud of that trick as she had been nice to me. That finished my going to school. From then on I had to take the place of a man. Summers it was farm work and winters it was work in the woods what daylight there was and chores after that.

My father took log jobs cutting and drawing old growth timber to Willcut's mill.

Mostly they were lots that someone had cut the smaller timber out and left the big.

This had to be handled in a different way than the smaller timber.

We had heavy teams and equipment and most of the larger logs were loaded where they fell

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when cut. There was a knack to falling the trees to leave them where they could load them. Cliff Stetson's Father, Orren and Charles Stacy were the most dependable help we had though there were several others by spells.

It was hard work but interesting. The front of your clothes were usually wet above the waist in front and your legs to the knees. On warmer days not so bad as on cold days. Colds were not common to those that worked out all the time.

I liked the cutting the best but mostly I was anchored to a pair of horses. I did the piling mostly, skidding was the term. A man helped to roll them and hooked the chain to the logs to be skidded.

The timber we cut was mostly too large to skid with one horse and with two horses with what was hitched to them was too much for one man, so two to hitch and roll the logs up. The piles had to be kept as even on the front end as possible so that

when they rolled onto the sled they wouldn't hit the horses. After a day of that there was a barnfull of cows waiting for you to milk, feed and bed, also the horses to be cared for.

After the snow melted so there was no more sleighing the logging stopped.

Maple sugaring came next which I have mentioned and it was a job I disliked.

Snow was still deep in the woods and ours was mostly a steep sidehill cap and the roads not very near the trees so it made for a lot of wallering with two pails of sap which could get tiresome. I was always glad when sugaring was done.

There was not much local social activities, the Grange and an occasional ten cent supper where you got more and better than you do today for a dollar. The Grange served as a jumping off place for the young folks as someone would know where there was

a dance and there would be enough teams so we could get there.

I stuck it out on the farm until the summer I was 16. We were about finished haying when a traveling show came to Cummington, Uncle Tom's Cabin. I had never seen it but had read it of course and wanted to see it. In haying we used about all the daylight there was, so I told my father I wanted to get through early and would like the driving horse. Well we didn't get through early so I was making as fast a cleanup and change as I could when I heard the horse being led out of the barn and I thought he is making up for working so late but I was wrong. He hitched the horse to the buggy and drove away. I started walking, went down the River Rd. and about half way to Cummington I could hear a harmonica. When I caught up with it Charles Stacy was playing "The Old Rugged Cross". We walked the rest of the way together. We missed the first of the show but it was no big loss as the show was lousy. There were only about half enough actors and they had to double, in fact I think they doubled for the blood hounds. The walk home was worse than the one going down as we had got to feeling the days work we had done. The next morning the show was not mentioned. After breakfast we went outside on the porch and as usual my Father said "Well we can't stand here, got to get going". I said "yes we want to get the haying finished because when that is done I am leaving". He didn't say anything, just walked away. The next week I left for Pittsfield. In the August of 1906, I thought I would like inside work so I tried Stanleys which was where the G.E. is now, but busines was not too good at that time but I did get a job driving a horse delivering stock from the storehouse to different departments.

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It really was a two man job as some of those boxes were hard to handle even with a truck. I mentioned it to the foreman and he said he knew it but a job was a job and there were men looking for them all the time. The only reason I was kept they said was because they had two men on it before. I had one a lot harder work but I was getting about the least pay of anyone. Finally they had me wheeling stock to some of the machines as I unloaded so I listened for a different job and when I found one on a milk farm I quit big industry and made as much and no harder.

The man that owned the farm had been in the wagon and harness business and made money and like a lot of others he had to have a hobby so he bought a nice farm and was going to raise thoroughbred horses. He hired a man to run the farm and he really took the old man over. They also had quite a large dairy and the bills began to pile up and the first he knew they clamped down on his business so he married an old maid from over in N. Y. State and put the farm in her name and saved that. He was a man in the 60's and she was 20 years younger and had a disposition like carbolic acid. She also had deformed hands, her thumbs grew out in line with her fingers and she was built like a slab of bacon with rind on both sides. He peddled his own milk, had a man who peddled it and washed the milk cans and bottles. We had to bottle the milk. He had (the peddler) saved \$1000.00 and he quit and invested his money in a condensed milk company that their process infringed on some other company and they were put out of business.

He had quit and I took over the route and I rather liked it. The farm was about a mile from the end of the trolley line in West Pittsfield and the last car left the city at 11 P.M.. Sometimes I would miss that one but there was a freight train that left about 12 and took

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a siding at West Pittsfield and I would jump that and get another hour in town.

The train was just pulling out one night and I had to run to get it. When it got to West Pittsfield it didn't stop. Wrong train. When it did stop I had no idea where I was until I saw the name Chatham on the station. All the money I had was a little change and just the clothes I had on. There was a hotel bar still open so I went in and asked the bar man if he could tell me someplace under cover for the night. I told him what happened and he asked if and where I had been working and I told him. He asked how I was fixed for money and I showed what change I had and he said about what he would expect from a young fellow that had been to town. He took me down a hall to a lav. and told me to take a shower.

On the way from Pittsfield we had passed through a short tunnel and as I was riding in an open car I had got a shower of soot and sparks. I was black as a stove and had a lot of small spark holes in my clothes. He told me to rap when I got washed and as he took my clothes I wasn't about to leave without them. I will admit I was nervous but when I rapped he came back with my clothes which he had brushed all the soot out of that he could. I asked what I could to pay him and he said "go to bed and let him do the same. " He showed me a cot in a small room, I could just get by the cot which was all right with me. In the morning when I got out in the middle of the forenoon that bar man had just showed up and when I asked what I could do to square up he said "forget it" that if I had been drinking or a few years older he would have thrown me out. I asked if there was any work around here and he said go over to the grain store and that folks left word there when they wanted help.

I went over and the man

there told of a farm they always wanted help on, it didn't sound too good to me but I wasn't in a choosey position so I started where he directed me and it seemed I walked until I thought I must be almost back to Mass. when I came to a Y in the road and there were flowers allover.

As I was looking at them someone asked if I was looking for someone and I looked around and there was a middle aged woman back of some shrubs. I told her I was just looking at the flowers, so she came across the road and started to talk.

She asked where I was from and how I came to be there and how old I was, very nice about it all. After a little she said it was almost lunch time could I eat a lunch in a little while? If so come up and sit on the porch while the girl got it.

As I had just passed the 17 yr. mark I was hungry all the time and all the breakfast I had was a cup of coffee and 2 donuts so I didn't try to beg off. The girl was a German girl that had been in this country 2 years and she sure put out a "lunch". Hungry as I was I couldn't eat it all. When I finally gave up she looked at me and said "vots der madder, not goot." I told her I never ate better but I was just one boy. She said "pretty big boy." She got through work in the middle of the afternoon and said her Uncle was manager of some rich man's farm and needed help, it proved to be the one I was looking for. I got a Job and the help boarded with the farm boss. He was a young man, just married a few months before to a shop girl that never had cooked until she was married and you wouldn't doubt it when you ate her cooking. We usually had to wait breakfast which beld up the days work, so one day her husband asked if I could cook and I told him just enough to get meals.

He wanted to know if I had just as soon help his wife get breakfast as to milk and I told him "sure" as I never did like to milk, so I became assistant cook. She had a bowl of salt and pepper mixed on the stove and she would grab a handful and shake it over whatever she was cooking and she wasn't too good at shaking at least not seasoning. She soon got so she didn't get up until I would tell her it was time for the help to come in but at least I could do better than she could.

She wasn't even attractive, had dead red hair and one eye that looked off sideways but want built bad and was pleasant so it want too bad. The farm supt. was the German girl's uncle, he had two girls school age about 10 and 12 years old.

They were a friendly family and due to my tender years I suppose were nice to me, used to have me up evenings to play cards with the young people. The German girls' English was plain but sort of scrambled. The first time I was there, after a little she asked me if I would "koom sit on the table and play peevinkle". I had an idea she meant "peknuckle" if that is the right way to spell it.

One thing that appealed to me about those card games was there was always plenty of good food. By that time I had got promoted to help the Gardner as they had a large garden, also a hot-house and furnished the vegetables for the big house and also the supt. and the farm house. After I got to help the gardner I also had to help the bosses wife get the other meals as the help kicked on her cooking. You can imagine how bad hers was if they preferred mine. With the aide of a cookbook she could cook what vegetables you didn't eat raw. The owner of the farm was a N. Y. stockbroker (I wish the dam bell on this machine would ring before

I get to the edge of the line) and was only there by spells but his wife and daughter were there nearly all the time and were all very nice people to work for. They had two French? maids, an Irish cook, a black butler and a gardener. They had a lot of lawn and had a horse mower. I had to put boots with wide pads on them to draw it but it still left a lot of trimming with a hand mower.

I had to help in the kitchen when they had a large party, carrying trays to the butler's pantry where the maids took them to serve from.

I didn't have time to do all the hand work as the gardener got drunk and I had extra garden work to do getting vegetables and flowers under the Misses supervision, the Irish cook weighed over 300 lbs. She couldn't sit on a chair so had a bench but she sure could cook and was real good-hearted. Whenever I came to the kitchen with anything I had to eat, she said she knew a growing boy was always hungry. I was as big then as I ever got but I could still eat. The night of the first party I helped at they served champagne which they kept chilled. The butler served the drinks and brought the empties back. As the party progressed the empties were not so empty. I had never tasted champagne before, it tasted just like cider does when it gets stingy so I didn't think that was very dangerous and kept helping the others finish the bottles. I didn't feel any effect of it until the next morning when I looked to see if they had to have ice and drank a bottle of root beer. I went and got some ice and washed it, put it in the wheelbarrow and started for the house. I was all right except my feet. I didn't stagger but I would go ahead a little and then I would go back. I did gain a little each time and finally got the ice in the ice-box. I then had to do the hand

mowing on the lawn. I thought at the end of the house was the best place to start as there was quite a bit of shrubbery and just a terrace. I mowed along the bottom which was level and then mowed along the top which was level, then down the end but when I tried to mow up I would go ahead a little and then back. In the meantime the boss had come out and was sitting on the porch watching. Finally he said "kind of a hot morning isn't it" and by then I was sweating enough to prove his statement. He told me that job would keep, to come up and sit down and cool off. I sat on the edge of the porch until he told me to come up and sit on the bench as he didn't like to talk to my back. We sat there quite a spell, he asked where I was from and how old I was and how I came to be out there. He thought it was quite a joke the way I got caught on the wrong train, he said "he bet I wished I had left that girl an hour earlier" I told him I hadn't mentioned a girl. He said "no but what else would get a young fellow in such a mess? After awhile I got to feeling guilty and said I had got cooled off and when I got off the porch he said "if you ever drink champagne don't drink anything the next morning until you have eaten." I told him I thought I would remember that. He laughed, nice guy.

I had written home after I was there awhile and when I had been there about 6 weeks I got a letter from a neighbor that Mother was having heart attacks every few days and the Dr. said he never saw anyone pull through so many such hard ones. I quit and got home as soon as I could. She was just coming out of one when I got home. The Dr. said he had put her on a different treatment and finally convinced her she had to stop using her arms

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so much. We got a girl that took over the greater part of the work but Mother still did the baking.

She took up hooking rugs, but it was too much arm strain and brought back the heart trouble. She had kept one rug for each of my two sisters and one that I liked best for me.

When Mother died one sister grabbed everything so I never got it. I asked her about it and she said she was taking care of it for me. I told her that was doing me a hell of a lot of good. I wouldn't have used it but I would have kept it where I could have seen it when I wanted to.

The spring I was 18 I went back to Pittsfield and the man that had the dairy farm had been trying to contact me. He had sold his milk route but had the dairy and sold the milk in bulk delivered at Pittsfield but couldn't get anyone he could trust to carry it. The ones he had were selling milk on the way and keeping the money.

He not only lost what they stole but was afraid of losing his market as he was supposed to deliver a certain amount each day. I had the promise of a summer job in Lanesboro at what was good pay \$1.50 for 10 hrs. I told the old man I would carry the milk until that job started or he found someone he could trust. A few days before I was to leave an older man that had worked for him in the harness business came to visit him and he took over.

I went to Lanesboro to work for a blacksmith that was going to build a house and wanted me to help the man that was going to build the cellar wall of stone.

When I was home I said if I got big enough to say No and make it stick I would never pick up another stone. This was different as I was getting paid. I had

helped my father rebuild a wall under the barn and a large culvert at the foot of West hill and liked the work. The mason that built the cellar wall was a good mason, acted grouchy but wasn't mean, had a sort of dry humor and I got to like him. He was fussy about the mortar and wanted the right stone at the right time.

He explained the principal of laying stone. I would give him the one I thought he would want and while I was getting it he would spread the mortar. After awhile if I just set one on the wall he would growl "put it where it belongs, why have to pick it up again". I also had to mix mortar which I didn't have to look for something to do. It was hard busy work but I liked it. We started a stone porch on the front one weekend, had to build stone posts also, we had one partly built Sat. night and he said when we quit "well you can see what they have got to look like." Monday morning no mason. I went over to the shop and asked what to do, if I should help around the shop or go home and he told me to go back and lay stone. He said he had been watching and I had done all except spread the mortar which want quite right as the mason did the pointing and he was an artist at it. I went back and went at it. I didn't make a very big showing the first day. The smithy came over about quitting time as I didn't have a watch and looked at what I had done and said "good enough" Keep at it. So I did. I was about finished by the last of the week when someone back of me said "I reckoned you could do it," it was the mason and he looked bad. He had been drunk for a week.

The carpenters came on and put the house up fast as he had quite a lot of help. A local contractor. As soon as they were through with the siding the mason came back and began plastering

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and I tended him. It wasn't such a busy job as it was on the stone work. The mason had me try plastering in the closets, I could put the rough coat on O.K. except the ceiling. It took sometime before I could plaster overhead. I never did get good at it.

That winter Mr. Gale that had the dairy farm got in touch with me and wanted me to work in the barn and get the milk ready to ship. The elderly man still took it to Town but was getting quite crippled so he couldn't do much except to drive and I did that in bad weather. The pay was good for then \$20.00 a month and board and laundry. The milk was shipped in 20 qt. cans, we had 2 sets one went out one day and came back the next, dirty. We of course had to wash them.

Mr. Gales health was failing and he was talking of selling the cattle and some of the land and I wanted to go West and be a cowboy but as I was about to get through I got a call that my father was sick in bed and the Dr. didn't know what did ail him. He didn't come to breakfast, he had come in from the barn and said he was going to dig some parsnips that had been in the ground all winter. Mother went out and the dog came down from the garden and then ran back so she went up and my father lay on the ground unconscious (I don't know if he was as bad off as my spelling). She called some of the neighbors and they got him in bed before

the Dr. from Ashfield came. He knew my father worked 16 to 20 hrs. a day and he said he probably just gave out, keep him in bed and he left some medicine and said let him know if my father didn't improve. My father lay in bed apparently asleep for 24 hrs. or so, then woke up and had no idea what happened, remembered starting to

dig and that was all.

He gradually gained strength but it was very slow. I started the spring farm work but as he had quite a bit of live stock it was really a 2 man job, there was no help available except by exchange, 1 day team labor for 2 days hand labor. With the field work and care of the stock it kept me exercised. He got so he helped with the haying, rode the mowing machine and horse rake and worked the horse fork to unload. He had a good income from his cows but was damn tight with his money.

Working the hours I did I didn't feel like driving 5 or 6 miles to a dance too often but once a week I could stretch a point hut to pry the money out of the old man was the hardest job of the week. I found a young Polish fellow that wanted a job so I took him home and told my father he better hire him as I was leaving. We finally made a deal, I got about half the wages I should and twice the work. He had one horse he got real young (3 yrs. old) and I had him to use. He was tough and had a rather sudden disposition but we got along good but not many could work him.

My father got a mate for the Dick horse, then he took a log job and hired help to do the cutting and an older man to drive a new team he had traded for. Charlie Stacy and I piled the logs cut before snow came and until snow got too deep (12 or 15 in.) The other team had been drawing as soon as there was snow enough for sleighing. I began drawing then. There were always piles in hard places to get and some where it was too steep for the older man to go as me being young could jump if anything happened. One load we came down, always had heavy chains under all the runners and as I was about to try to stop the chains caught a root stopped

dead but I didn't. I finally stopped in a pile of brush but not dead. I had hurt my back so that I couldn't bear to stand up. They unloaded the logs and got me on the sled on blankets and took me home. We lived upstairs at what is Seeleys (This was after I was married, an Aunt of mine was with us, a practical nurse and she said she had treated several such cases.) I lay on my stomach and she wet a cloth in turpentine put it on my back with a dry one over it and ironed it with a hot flat iron. It didn't feel good at the time and the next day you could peel the skin off but the ache was still there. It was over a week before I could drive what with the sore and the lame both.

At least I thought the logs are all off the steep place but when I got in the woods they were still there. I asked "how come" and they said my Dick horse wouldn't go back up there. Like a damn fool I wanted to see if he would. We had to detour and come up a more gentle slope as you couldn't go straight up. I finished the logs on the steep place. I have skipped 2 years so will go back and catch up.

After the Polish fellow came I left and headed west. I had \$25.00 for a winter and most of a summer's work but had my mind made up to go. I saved \$5.00 and bought a ticket with what I had left that got me to some small town in Ohio, I don't remember the name though it does come to my mind once in awhile. I knew I was going to have to find work on the way and had been told there was work through the middle west in the fall. When I got off the train I sized the town up and it was rural all right. I tried the hardware store and was told some of the farmers were hiring huskers and

told me how to get to some of them. As it was getting late to start walking I asked if there was a place one could stay over night and he pointed out a place where they do sometimes.

I got a bed but no meals so I went to a store and got something to fill up on. The bed wasn't one you would be apt to oversleep in but it was clean. There were two rooms in the far end of the ell part that you reached by outside stairs which I used to leave early the next morning with the last of my store lunch. I walked about 2 miles before I saw a farm with any corn to mention. The buildings were back from the road and were well kept with large fields of corn still standing. I went up the drive almost to them a man came from the barn and watched me. When I got near he said "looking for someone", I told him I was looking for work. He said a lot were doing that so they could dodge it. I told him I might do the same if it paid well. As it was still early he asked me into the house where his wife was getting breakfast. He asked quite a few questions about where I was from and what work I had done and had I ever husked corn. I told him I had in the East and he said they husked different there. I had heard they did as they husked it on the stock. He asked if I could eat some breakfast and I told him I could if I had a chance. He said set up to the table and prove it so I did. A girl 4 yrs. older than I came just before we ate wearing overalls and as I had told him my name he passed it on to the rest. He said if we both liked I could stay on and husk and told me he would pay me whatever I earned. I didn't really like that bargain and told him I didn't think I could afford to work for that but I would try it a few days if he wanted.

He said to "eat up if you are planning

to work and if you don't work it will be all you do get. After we finished eating he said the girl would show me what to do. She asked if I could harness a horse and I told her I had so she showed me a pair and pointed out the harness that went with them. After I had them harnessed she said she never saw a harness thrown on that way. Where did I learn that way? I told her I had to harness horses when I wasn't big enough to lay them on and had to throw them up on. The wagons had rather high boxes, one side higher than the other. You drove along beside the standing corn and husked 2 rows and threw it into the wagon. After a little you didn't have to look at the wagon, the horses moved along almost on their own.

The girl went ahead and showed me how it was done. She said to husk it clean but not bother with the "nubbins" (small ones). It was simple when one got used to it as the motions were all about the same. You had what was called a palm that was like a glove without fingers or a back but had claws in the palm. Two strokes down the ear was supposed to clean the ear. She watched a few minutes and had to go back to work as my two rows were back of the ones she was working on. When she had a load I had about 1/2 a load. She stopped to watch as she went to unload and at where I had husked and said "not bad". As I got the hang of it I speeded up a little. She was almost 3 loads ahead of me at night when she said "time to quit". I asked if it was O.K. to finish my load and she said "if you want." I didn't really want to but hated to admit it. When I got to the barn and put the team in and unharnessed she had fed them hay and some dry corn and said they would be turned in the yard later where they could drink and have more hay.

We then went in to supper, her mother wanted to know how come late for supper and the girl told her I wanted to finish my load. Her mother wanted to know if that was so and I told her not quite that I was ashamed to quit with almost a full load. She looked at me a little while and said "well I will be" Then she said "lets eat." The old man hadn't said anything, just grinned, so did the girl. Nobody seemed mad and I was hungry. After supper the old man and I smoked and I asked him about the horses and he said Will had let them out in the yard and I said I hadn't seen Will yet. He said "funny you been working back of her all day, or at least I don't think you passed her as nobody ever did husking and several have tried. I didn't feel so bad about my showing after that. By the end of the week I made the same loads she did but I worked the best I could and I think she let up a little. She was a pleasant girl but never talked much. Her father was crippled in his hands and ankles but was cheerful and pleasant. The girl said he had been a hard worker and it bothered him to not be able to do more. Help was hard to get and didn't stay long. It was a good place to work as the food was very good and plenty of it. Also a good bed and not short nights. We were finishing the last of the husking in the last field when they had a bunch of steers, they called them "feeders" come. They were shipped from the west. I have forgotten how many there were of them but they unloaded a car load of them, at the station and someone else had 1/3 of them and the rest came to this place. What looked like a man of about 60 drove them alone on horseback. The girl went out with a horse and buggy to lead him in. That horse knew more than half the

Senators as he tended to business and kept those steers in line with no trouble. They put them in the big lot we had finished husking and they went to work on the fodder. The fellow that brought the steers had to wait 3 days to see that the steers all were O.K. He said that they were kept on short feed while being shipped as they came through in better shape but sometimes they picked up something in the cattle cars but it would show up in 3 days if they had. If they kept eating and drinking for 3 days they were O.K. The man I thought was 60 turned out to be 42. He went West from N.Y. state when he was 16 and landed in Texas, thought he would like to be in a warm climate but suffered more from the cold than he did in Montana.

The steers came from Iowa. I didn't think Iowa was a ranching state and he said it wasn't not as they used to ranch and there want many big ranches except in Texas and N. Mexico and a few parts of some other states in the rough parts that couldn't be tilled and most of them were fenced. He said t!le first year he got \$10.00 a month summers and his board and winter clothes in the winter and want much better than a farm hand, doing odd jobs but he did get to do a little riding and got so he could rope some. He said the roping came easy and he got so he could stay on the average horse but you couldn't trust any of them. He was in Texas about 10 months, part of one summer and one winter. Come spring he left Texas one night as he had most of what he earned the summer before and one month's wages that spring. He said Texas had the most penetrating cold he thought of any place. He worked his way north as a 'puncher" as he had

picked up enough to pass and hit a small ranch that only payed him 20 a month as all he had was a cheap horse and an old saddle that took nearly all the money he had. They furnished him with a rig to work with and when he left there he had to take a horse and saddle to get all his pay but it was a pretty good rig. He said he wished a lot of times he was home, being a cowboy want what it sounded like back East. It was long hours and out all kinds of weather and eat when you could.

He said it was better at that time as it was mostly fenced and they put up hay so it want much different than farming. He was pretty well used up for a man his age as he had been thrown off horses a good many times and was ruptured. He said he was the only man on the ranch that worked on a horse mostly riding fence.

After listening to that young, old cowboy I lost interest in going West and after he would speak about how good the water was in Ohio and how poor most of it was out West I would think how good it was back home, as I didn't like the water there as it was hard. As it was getting into October and that job was about done and nothing more in sight except \$10.00 a month and board I figured East was better than West as I could get a job cutting wood or logs.

When I got to Pittsfield I called my Mother and she said she had been trying to contact me for a week as my Father had been sick with a cold for sometime but had kept going to the woods as he had started a log job and wanted to get all the logs cut and piled as he could before snow got deep but had to come home before night and rest before he could do chores. So I went home and took over, he went to the woods the first day and showed me what

he had planned and then went home. The next day he had the doctor and the Dr. said he had the flu. At one time the Dr. didn't think he would live as he was filling up and his cough was so tight. I had brought some grapefruit home with me and he tried the juice of them. He said if he had something sour he thought it would help so we got him some lemons and would take the juice clear and by the time the Dr. came next day. The Dr. asked what happened and we told him about the lemon juice he said he had never heard of it before but would recommend it if he could find anyone that could take it. He was quite awhile getting on his feet but after about a week he would ride to the job with one of the teams on good days and stay a spell, a team would take him almost home. He gradually worked back and by spring was doing his share. I was 20 the next fall and he had taken charge of the town roads the spring before and hired me to run the farm. He was the first to have charge of all the roads in town. It was a summer job mostly as in the winter nearly everyone that had a pair of horses fastened two land plows on a sled and plowed a section. The drifts had to shoveled and sometimes by spring the banks would be so high in the drifts one would have to stand up above and shovel it back. The next winter the town bought two snow rolls. They were made in two sections, each section 6 ft. high and 6 ft. wide. They had a seat in the middle wide enough for two to ride on and little to spare and were a damn cold thing to ride on. The second winter the town bought a 3d roll and they divided the east and the south part of the town and my father, Frank Alletson and I rolled

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the whole of the west part of the town with 6 horses. Frank and I got the honor? of driving.

The second year Father had the roads, he made me a proposition on taking over the farm if I would pay the taxes and furnish the hay for his horses. It seemed like a good chance for me to get a start as there were 10 cows of his and I had one of my own. I took it and did two men's work. My mother's heart got worse and my sister came home to stay a spell but she took over and started raising turkey. Bought some young pullets and I made some pens 12 ft. square and covered with wire that had to be moved every day which I did with a horse. She also bought a car which she could never learn to drive. She sold the turkeys and the car in the fall and said all summer she wouldn't stay through the winter.

As I had been going with a girl from Spencer that was visiting her sister here in town and we had decided to get married so that fall, September 2, 1912 we were married at the Congo Church in Spencer. I had hired an elderly man two months before that, an old sailor and he fitted in perfect, was handy at anything and was clean and said he would like to stay as long as we could use him. Mother, Father and I all left for the wedding while he was finishing chores. When the folks got back the old man was gone and so was anything he could carry. Mother had baked a large pot of beans to help out on his cooking and the beans were gone but he left the pot. I was going to honeymoon at a camp at Pontoosic Lake in Pittsfield but had to cut it short and get back to the farm.

I had raised two acres of potatoes that summer which had to

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be dug and a silo had to be filled. At that time we only sold the cream and had the skim milk to feed calves or pigs. I raised 7 heifers and 4 bull calves that summer and traded the 4 bulls for a 2 yr. heifer. I thought I had done O.K. as I sold one load of potatoes in Pittsfield that paid for the fertilizer and left me some for furniture. I thought I was sitting pretty and the wife got pregnant and developed what seemed to be a serious stomach trouble. My mother-in-law was visiting and talked with the Dr. and told him to spare no expence and he didn't came every day and no improvement so I called another Dr. for a consultation. They decided on ulcers, aggravated by the orange and grapefruit juice her mother insisted she have. The new Dr. said a nurse for a week or so to see she was on a diet and got her medecine as she should would do more good than a Dr. I got a nurse for 2 weeks and the wife was O.K.

By the time I got the Dr.'s and nurses and current bills paid I had sold my stock and was back where I started. I took a job in Windsor on a summer farm of ex-Senator Crane. The house we lived in was owned by Crane and was a mile from the farm at the foot of a steep hill. The boss at the farm was named Harry Ford, a pompous windbag. I was to drive the team. They didn't do very much real farming, I acre of potatoes and a large garden that mostly went to Cranes. I had to pay \$4.60 a month rent and 10 cents a quart for milk which I found out later I was supposed to get free. I started working for \$1.25 for a 10 hr. day. One time I had to take some chickens down to Cranes late in the summer and had to wait until Crane got home as he wanted to send a sample of some straw back that he wanted some just like it to put around shrubs.

While I was waiting the man that had charge of looking after everything around his residence visited with me. When he found who I was he had known my father when they were young. He asked how the job was and I told what I was getting and was paying rent and milk and he said if I would tell Crane about the rent and milk I would get it back. I told him it was in the bargain when I took the job and I wouldn't kick, that I was going to quit in a month and have an operation for a bad hernia I had. In July our first child was born. The wife was going to the hospital the next day but she woke me up a little after midnight and said to call the Dr. We didn't have a phone but a neighbor about 1/4 mile did and I went there and they said they would call the Dr. In about 1/2 hr. I ran back and they said they couldn't get central but would call the Dr. as soon as they could. I ran back and not any too soon as the baby came just a little after I got back. I had everything that I could use full of hot water and of course the wife had all the baby things and I had them handy. The birth was very similar to that of a lamb and everything went O.K. By the time they got central and the Dr. and an aunt of mine and 2 or 3 other women I had the cord tied and the baby washed and well oiled and powdered which I didn't know what the oil and powder was for but the wife said you were supposed to put it on. My wife kept calm all through it and I think I was more scared than she was. One experience like that is enough. In November I went to the hospital and was operated on for a hernia. They kept me flat on my back for 2 weeks and I was so weak when I did get up that I couldn't stand. I had to stay another week and then it was 2 weeks before I could travel. We went to

Spencer to visit Helen's folks and stayed there nearly a month. Every time I would speak of going to Plainfield they would call the local Dr. and he would advise against it. I finally went to see the Dr. and told him I was going home and he wanted to know what kind of work I would be doing and I told him logging. He said to be careful about lifting. We came back to Plainfield and I went to driving what had been my team as one of them had been giving them trouble. They got loaded and he wouldn't start. My father got mad and got a limb and bushed him out. The man driving said the horse stood there as if there was no one around. My father stopped to rest and they were talking about how stubborn the horse was when both horses jumped and ran the sled over a stump and tipped ~ the load over down the hill. It was too steep to get the sled back up the hill so they had to roll the logs down to the foot of the hill to another road and then get the sled down. I started to work driving and that was all I was supposed to do but it want long before I was loading and I don't think it hurt me any. I have had 3 operations for hernias and have the 4th hernia now (at 80) and never got one lifting. I previously got ahead of myself on the logging. It was a large lot that my father had started the time he was sick and as we only logged winters we were 4 winters on them. There were 2 lots connected. We also drew some from a lot in Hawley that the mill owner and his help had cut. I liked the work but I always came out short on the money. The 2 years following my operation were not very profitable as the only work there was summers was road work and logging winters but I did acquire some livestock. We also bought a farm with no buildings on it, hadn't been farmed for nearly 50 years except the

grass cut and that was nearly run out but I had bought the timber on the lot with 3 yrs. to get it off. The year after I bought it the bottom fell out of the lumber market so I could only get the same price in Pittsfield as I could at the mill here so couldn't clear myself working it. When I bought the farm I thought I could use the lumber to build on the farm which I did with the help of the neighbors and my father-in-law.

I built the barn first and it was the last barn raising in town. What added 2 girls to our family and I had started the house, put in the cellar and closed it in. The next January (1920) an epidemic of bloody dysentery hit the family. The two girls and two boys were hit the worst. We lost Orrel and Phyllis and nearly lost Donald, Frank wasn't hit so hard and Eunice who was kept isolated didn't get it. We finished the inside of the house enough to live in and in early in the winter, I had my wood cut and seasoned but still in the woods. We got an early snow and ice storm early in December with a crust that you couldn't drive a horse through. We had to break the crust in the roads all over town. That was followed by another ice storm within a week but as there was no new snow under the ice it didn't have to be broken. I had just got the first crust broken the night before the second ice storm and it froze the first crust solid and I couldn't break it. The ice had broken down a lot of wood above the house and I could slide it down on the crust with the aid of a chain. It was nearly all green and some ice still on it so the wife had her troubles too but she didn't complain as we were in our own home (when we got it paid for) I had a lot of help in the

building from my neighbors and from my father-in-law or I never would have made it. The farm as I have said hadn't been worked in nearly 50 years and had brush and trees around the walls. There had been an orchard in the lot where the house stands now and it hadn't been mowed close to the trees so there were brush around them in places 25 or 30 ft. wide.

In the next 20 years I cleared the brush and trees back to the walls and increased the hay production about 10%. We were selling milk at that time. When it started it was a great help to the farmers. A former resident of Plainfield in Springfield had a milk business and he started buying milk locally and was fair to deal with. But he sold to Hood and things changed. (Nash was the former Plainfield man). Hood kept making new rules and gave you a rating. The rated milk sold for about \$.05 below the peddled price and the surplus for \$.01 and as I was making 100 lbs. of surplus and only 35 lbs. of rated I couldn't stay with it so I sold the cows. The cows hadn't gone yet when a man from Springfield came up and inspected the barn and told me of changes I would have to make and I listened when he run out of ideas he wound up by giving me 2 weeks to do all he had suggested.

As he started to get in the car he said he would be back in 2 weeks to see if it was done. Then I told him I had sold the cows and was through selling milk and also what I thought of him and his company and not to come back again. If he had gone where I told him to he wouldn't have got back in 2 weeks anyway.

I had to take any job ' I could to pay taxes and dr. bills My wife was a husky looking person but in the 22 yrs. we were married she has ulcers, a gall bladder operation, Bright's Disease and a

series of slight shocks which finally took her. She also had 7 children. When Dutch was born she was in the hospital 6 weeks which took every \$ I could get. I also went in debt over \$200.00 which was money in those days. I had my stock, tools and farm clear of debt except for one cow that I had just bought on time but the banks were not lending money on farms at that time and there were no steady jobs at that time so when I was asked to take charge of the town roads I thought it was a chance to get out of debt and took them, I didn't want the job as I had seen enough of it when my father had them. As I have mentioned before the snow roads were rolled and in the spring when the snow was gone in places where it lay as it fell where it had drifted it could be several ft. deep and would have to be opened for wagons. It was packed so hard it was nearly impossible to shovel it, also the sugar season was on and not much help available, so I used teams and land plows to break it up on warm days and it went surprisingly fast. Central St. had been graveled and so had Main St. from the Brick Store to Ashfield line. These we used the grader on as early as the frost was out as they became washboardy when it was dry. Cars were getting more common even if you could only run them in the summer. People soon got to where they wanted winter roads for cars too so at town meeting they voted to buy a Fordson Crawler tractor and plow and keep the Central St. road to Cummington open. That caused trouble as the voters on other roads were paying for a road that so few could use. We tried one winter to keep Main and Central open with the Fordson and were lucky to have a rather light winter but couldn't do a good job as the rig was too small.

The next spring the town voted to buy a Catapillar 30 with plow and a new grader. When I moved from the farm to where I now live I left a lot of things in the farmhouse on West Hill. I had sold the farm to a Will Write of Washington D.C.

Among the things I left were the Town Reports I had acquired since becoming a voter and someone had a key that fitted the lock got in and I lost a lot of things. This Write I sold to said they were not going to take over until after the war and I could leave anything I wanted to until they took over and as I moved into small quarters (two rooms) I left quite a lot of things there. The lock on the kitchen door was one of those that I think everyone had a key that would fit. Anyway someone got in and took a lot of things that I would liked to keep. A lady? in town gave me a piece of custard pie one time and gave me one of my wife's forks to eat it with. It was of an odd design with her initial on it. The lady's initial would have been a B or W. It was very good pie re~ardless. I lost a lot of books that had been given me over the years and several years collection of Youths Companion that I wish I had now.

I have wandered quite a ways from the road job due to those lost town reports but I would like them as I have no faculty for remembering dates. To get back to the road job, the town wanted all the roads in town plowed except the Bush roads so we were plowing more miles with one piece of equipment than they do now with several. We didn't do the neat job they do today and no sanding Bill Packard had an old grader blade in front of his truck that he could mop up after I had pushed back which did help but he could only use it on Main and Central as it was a rigid hitch and none of the side roads were improved, mostly narrow and in many places only about the width of the plow. Many of them have been widened and raised

and blacktopped since I had them, mostly by Frank Alletson who had charge of them for over 30 years. At the time I had the roads I started with horses as there were few tractors in town and those were farm type. As there were fewer teams each year and smaller horses it was getting more difficult to get teams large enough to do the work as it wanted heavy horses on the scraper. Also with cars getting more plentiful it was necessary to get over town faster. Somewhere there were no cars could be skipped a few days come back and do later if it didn't take too much time traveling. With a tractor one could start 1/2 hour early in the morning and move nearly across town where with horses it meant 3 or 4 hrs. lost time where one man (the boss) could move the rig alone and be there at starting time. I used the light tractor 2 yrs. but it was too light so when we got the large tractor and the new large scraper we were really in business. The gravel that was formerly hauled by horses was now hauled in 1 yd. Model T Ford trucks. Outside of deep excavation was done by hand labor, also loading gravel, dirt and stone was. At that time the road base was stone walls broken up and laid in first and then covered with gravel. The stones were broken with hammers weighing from 10 to 14 pounds powered by man.

We had a hurricane in 1938 just as I was starting a Chapter 90 job from where Ralph Rice now lives (1971) to just above Arlan Roberts and put in a new bridge between where Dutch and E. Shepard now live. It was the first year the State office would allow me to hire a shovel. It was digging a new channel where the new bridge would be when the hurricane hit. After an hour of downpour

the operator quit and moved the shovel out on the bank which was lucky as the water would have been in the cab. The operator was Don Thomas of Charlemont, when he got back to Charlemont they were blocking the old covered bridge as it was expected to go any time but they let him over and he had only gone a little way after he crossed when it went. He got home and parked in the yard and was telling his wife how lucky he was when a tree in the yard blew down across his car. His wife asked him if he still felt lucky and he told her he was lucky he was in the car.

When I started on the bridge again, about 2 weeks later as all available help was called on to get Route 116 open for through traffic as both Berkshire and Mohawk Trails were out. My job had been pushed off the old location as a contractor was laying a strip of gravel and blacktop from the brick store to Ashfield line. Traffic was detoured to Cummington as the west part of the Berkshire Trail was O.K. I went on with the bridge work and made the final pouring the day before Thanksgiving, on a cold drizzly day. When the help all got there we talked it over as once we started we had to finish the whole top as that couldn't be poured in sections. The whole bridge was mixed and poured on the bridge site as transit mix was not available at that time. (1938) The water had to be heated and the mix wheeled up onto the top of the form, The engineer made me dump the aggregate the lower side of the bridge as he said the vibration on the upper side could crack the new concrete. The engineer was new to bridge work and rather officious. I also had to take samples of every batch that was mixed or rather he was supposed to be there and take them. I took

them in 6 in. tubes 16 in. high and stored them in our "Of is" which was the old 4 holer that had been taken off of the town hall when inside plumbing was installed. We didn't finish until after dark but we did get a good job. This same engineer told me to leave the forms on until he told me to take them off. When I thought they should come off I tried to contact him but no luck so I went down to the H.W. office and none of the big brass was there so I asked some pompous ass what I should do and he asked "what were you told to do so I told him again and he told me to do as I had been told to do. So I told him O.K. to hell with it as it want my bridge. The next day the Chief Engineer was up and asked how the town bridge was as he had been told it want my bridge. I gave him the story and he wanted to know if I was sure he said that and I told him if he hadn't I would have had the forms off and the

concrete rubbed down. He had me pull off a few boards and it looked better than I hoped for as I had them pour what went near the form moister than the rest as it comes out smoother and takes less rubbing. He looked at it and said that was smooth enough for the fisherman to look at. It came cold right after Thanksgiving and we hung canvas over the ends of the openings and put smudges in under. The top was covered with hay. We closed down soon after that. I finished the job the next summer. It was a tight thing to finish with the money I had left as the work they did for flood relief had made cost me money as I had to buy fill around the bridge that I would have got where I had to make a cut later and draw it away. I also had to dig up some of the blacktop as it was not put in to grade. The state wanted to contract the job I did but the

townspeople as we were still feeling the effects of the depression so they contracted the job so I had to do it for that amount or the town had to pay to finish it.

The state had no money to make up for the extra cost as flood relief had cost so much and still was and when I got to what should have been the end of the contract they found there had been a mistake in the engineering and my road was 18 in. lower and off 1/2 the width of the road from the old one. I had mentioned it to the engineer at the bridge but he thought I was wrong but said he would check but he never did. All of the state help were busy and the engineer that I usually had was one of the best so I never got to see him. Later I found out he did come through Sundays and check. I finally got in touch with him and he looked at what I was up against and said it was a mistake on the surveyors part for not getting it in the contract but I would have to carry it along 150 ft. to meet the other road but with no extra money as flood work was costing so much. I had to cut the bank back which was some 12 ft. high and was all shale stone so I put it in the road and covered it with gravel and brought that new part up on grade to meet the old road and I guess no one ever knew the difference. It is still there. The last the State turned loose a lot of young fellows that had taken Civil Service and had been waiting for jobs, made them inspectors. We had one for everything except the water boy. They had all read a book and wanted me to know it. I took a lot of advice that I never used and most of them got wise and layed off. They were mostly nice guys. The next year the State put the Chapt. 90 and 81 together.

Frank Alletson had charge of 81 and as the 90 money was cut so bad they put it with the 81 and Alletson was also a good road man. He had worked for me when I had the 81 and he had worked on 90 with me. He stayed with the road job for over 30 yrs. He was the best road man we ever had and when he got to the compulsory retirement age the town took legal action so he could be voted in instead of appointed. They have had 3 different ones since him that didn't prove out and now have Frank (Buzz) Alletson Jr. who has possibilities. So far he has worked out pretty good but although he weighs over 300 lbs. and his father about 155 lbs. he is going to have a job to fill his father's shoes. 30 some yrs. experience by an intelligent man isn't picked up in one year.

There was a 3 yr. break between my maintainance job and taking over 90. I worked 3 summers under Walter (Pop) Shaw who was appointed by the H. W. Office to handle the 90 as he had done that in several towns and was very capable. At that time, most of us property owners were 2 or 3 yrs. behind on taxes. As there was a surplus of available help so they were worked a week on and a week off and every other paycheck went on back taxes. My first summer we worked the street from the 4 corners (Brick store) to about where I live now. At that time I lived on the farm on West Hill. The job through the street was a dual job, one of which was a drainage system from Jackson's to opposite the Town Hall where it crosses the street and under Carvers buildings. I was put in charge of installing it. It was VC. tile (glazed clay). The ditch was dug by hand labor, in places 7 ft. deep as the tile had to be laid on a true grade. As it was in the hot part of the summer it was a wicked job. I had a steady job as the State Office put me in

charge and wouldn't let me be laid off. We had to connect up with the sink and cellar drains at each residence, also put in concrete drop inlets with covers where side drainage came in. I also had to connect with a stone drain that comes from the 4 corners (Brick Store) to the library and crosses near the Fire House. Also cross drainage at Leon Burts below with concrete work. It was getting cold by that time and the job was tapering off, just a few men so Pop stayed in the town garage in back of the hall and did his book work while I wore out what money was left with a few men. The next year when we started Pop took me down by Yon Hollands said he had a little job for me, that he would find something else when that was done. He said we had to make a fill across the hollow and put in a 60 ft. culvert with a concrete head wall on the end a 40 ft. stone retaining wall above that. I asked the engineer to give me a starting point but he said he didn't have time, for me to figure it out and the next one wouldn't bother me. I told him the next one wasn't bothering me a damn bit, it was this one. I finally got it figured out and pegs set to start from when the head engineer came up as I wasn't sure about the concrete as when we dug down for a base we were on bare ledge and I wanted to know if I should put iron pins in as the ledge sloped. He asked if I knew where I could get any heavy steel right away and I had some 2 in. scraper axels from old graers I had wrecked and saved out. He said O.K. have some holes drilled and have the pins stick up 2 ft. and how many to put in. He also looked at the pegs I had for starting points and asked how I got them and he said to go ahead. I was lucky to get 2 good men to lay stone, the only trouble was one of them wanted to

have charge of the job and went to Pop and told him he would lay stone if he could have charge. Pop told him! had charge. The man said what other work do you have for me and Pop told him "nothing" work there or quit. He was on the next morning and did good work but was as disagreeable as he dared be and not get fired. I would have replaced him but we had to use local help and there were no other stone masons on the job. One day he went to far and I had been getting madder all the time. He was 50 or 60 pounds heavier than I was but I popped my cork and called him all the things I could think of and he didn't say a word. After a little I realized I was showing what a fool I was and turned to walk away and Pop and the engineer were sitting on the bank grinning. Afterwards Pop said he wondered how long before it would happen and was glad he was there when it did. That fellow was O.K. after that. I thought he would quit. The next summer we started at that camp just over Barber Hill and went to the camp this side of the Plainfield Pond. The road has since been re-built. Pop told me to go find a gravel bank so I went down on the River Rd. where I had dug in and found gravel and with 2 men and a truck cleaned off the surface and found good gravel enough to do the job. Pop had a bad heart, some days he would have to go home so most of the job except the book work was left to me. When the engineers came up they and Pop would come where I was and talk the job over. We worked until the first of December and the last day we worked Pop came late and told me he had forgot to tell me that the new guard rail we had put up that year was to be painted that same season and what did I think it would cost for labor, he had the paint. I had painted a lot of rail when I had the road so

could tell what would cost. He said he had asked 2 of the men some time before about painting and they said they would be glad to but he had forgot to speak to me about it. He said he would turn in the amount of what the state allowed per ft. for painting rails as it was a little more than I said and in my name and I could pay the others. Sunday I contacted the two others and told them I would like to get the painting done before it got colder and they both said they were going deer hunting the next week so one of my boys and I went up and as it was rather cold but clear

and not bad for December we got to painting about 10 after warming the paint.

We had another short day to finish it but we got a wet snow that night and we had to brush and wipe the railings off and wait until near noon before we dared to paint and it want as it should be then. We had plenty of paint and used it as it got cold in the P.M. but we got it all covered. It began to snow hard as we were picking up and we had to go to the store for gas before going home (West Hill).

I had an old Studebaker car I gave \$25.00 for with high wheels and a low speed. We tried the hill and couldn't make it so I tried around by Ritters and Bluff St. almost at the top of the hill in back of what is Seely's barn lot it began to spin and slid against the bank but we kept going but there was an awful squealing sound for awhile.

When we got to the top of the hill or just over Don said aren't you going to see what it done to the car? I told him when we got home if we did. We did as there was no uphill from there on to bother. Pop Shaw had a heart attack and never recovered. He also never turned in my time for painting railings so Don and I had

two unpleasant days work for no pay. I took over and finished the job the next summer. Pop was a very good construction man but due to his health the last summer things that I noticed didn't go as they should and costs built up so when I took over the money was short and they came up with an expensive surface which never proved out to be good but I finally made it but sweat a lot doing it.

The next summer I got drawn on jury and got on a case that lasted a month. It had to do with water rights connected with the Quabin Reservoir and I had a road job waiting. As soon as I got off jury I started at Ashfield line. Two years later I finished at Arlan Robert's. For me that was finis.

The state was putting less money into the 90. What was allotted was fl!rafted out for this and that. They could dream up more things in Boston to short change the small towns.

The state let the towns use more equipment and hire out of town larger trucks. Gravel could be put on the road for what it formerly cost to load

it. I was glad to get out of the job, the chief engineer was talking with me near the finish of my last job, after that flood of young enfl!ineers that things would level out and it would be more simple with more machinery and less hand labor as I had to keep the labor classified and paid at a scale dreamed up by some damn fool in Boston. Men that had worked as common labor and were satisfied could nearly do anything there was to do. As the labor scale had to be posted in plain sight which was on the inside of the tool box cover. It caused a lot of trouble for me as some that were the least capable wanted the highest paid jobs. Only one made

trouble, he wanted to build stone retaining walls and I tried him (that job paid highest) but he couldn't lay two stones in the mud and have them stay so I took him off and he was sore, said he would to the selectmen about it. As two of them worked on the job it was no problem to do that. I got the selectmen and him down where he had been working and told him to go on with his complaint. After they saw his work they told him if he didn't want to work at something he could do, stay home.

That was an election year and they made a change in Boston, after which things eased up. No more bidding on everything used on the job and the labor scale got lost. I had all of it I wanted, at times I had almost as many engineers as I did men and more paper work than the President's secretary and some of the men were getting within 50 cents a day as much pay as I was and I had to furnish a car and do more running after work than a political candidate. I was fed up. The next summer I did the grading for Alletson and relaid some stone culverts, also some retaining wall on the River Rd. Frank got hurt and was in the hospital for some time and as he started rebuilding, a piece of road past where Eddie Moran lives I was asked to take charge until he got back. We had to lay off to do some tarring the South Rd. It was over a month before he was back and I stayed two weeks.

I did the grading for Frank as long as they had the old tractor pulled grader, then they got a new tractor and as his regular driver that had driven for me too went into the chicken business and dairying with his father I drove tractor for him scraping and filled in otherwise for two summers and logged winters and helped him out with the snow plowing which was still mostly tractor work,

they did hire one truck. (Cliff Stetson) There was still not too much improved road in town. The town finally bought a Ford v8 truck and still hired one which cut down on tractor work. The town bought a combine power grader which was a big step ahead as we had quite a bit of gravel road by then and the only time to scrape that is when it is wet so it will pack. I had been doing more log and wood cutting as I could make more at it. I also did some stone work.

At the first of World War II I went to work at Anson Bett's manganese mine. It was an open mine, they had an old compressor and a good jack hammer, also 3 or 4 old Model A trucks they drew the broken ore out of the mine and dumped it on a loading platform that was built up so it was down hill loading the road truck. The ore was trucked to Dalton and loaded in cars there. They only had one road truck so when we were shipping it was busy. The mining operation was fairly simple, drill, blast and then break the big chunks into a size that you could put into a truck. You had your choice of what size hammer you used as long as you broke ore. I used a 10 lb. and could break as much as anyone. Some used a 12 and some 14 and one guy a 16 lb. and he broke the least of any of us. It was hard work but they were a nice bunch to work with, mostly young fellows.

I had an uncle killed by a car while I was working at the mine and as my father was the nearest relative he was asked to administer the estate but due to his age they asked me to take over for him. About all he had was a burial fund in the bank which couldn't be released without some authority. I should have known there would have to be a settlement with the insurance company.

I had to get a lawyer and there was more running out to the lawyers. I was working at the mine so I would go to Adams at noon to the lawyer's so as not to lose time. I would take the River Rd. from Savoy to save time. There was a place on that road that washed out in the hurricane and the town of Windsor had just filled it in the day before. I met a car driven by an older man and as there was a high drop off on his side I pulled across the ditch. After he had passed I tried to back into the road and the side of the car near the road sank in the new dirt and began to tip. As the ground was frozen, when the car~landed on its side in the road my hand that I had braced in the top slid out the window that was down about 4 in. and the rain strip over the door caught my fingers on my left hand and as the car slid just a little it ground hell out of them. I got to the hospital by relays, the local Dr. didn't want any part of it.

They dressed them and they healed after a fashion but have always been stiff but usable, better than none. I had to quit at the mine as I couldn't either break or handle ore as I couldn't hold a hammer or anything harsh for some time. I put in the winter learning to chop with one stiff hand. My forefinger on that hand had been cut off by a wood saw but the middle finger want quite as stiff as the other two so I got some grip with the left hand. By spring I could chop again but mostly left handed as I couldn't hold on to the end of the handle too good so I made handIes with a large nub. A stone hammer was harder as there was no nob on the end but by taping I could make out. I worked for Pop Shaw that summer and that fall Betts came to me and wanted me to

come back to the mine but I told him I wasn't as good with a hammer as before but he said he didn't want me in the mine but to look after it as he was going to teach Minorology at Amherst and wanted me to take charge of the mine. That didn't mean as much as it sounds as he had two sons that got an allowance, work or not. They were to truck the ore to Dalton and load the cars. We had good help and the mining went good but the shipping dragged. We had a car partly loaded and the truck drivers got lost. I couldn't leave the car left partly loaded as demurage was high and during the war they wouldn't hold one but 5 days, and you had to pay on the last two, so I put one of the boys from the mine on the road truck to finish the car. Bett's came home and found him driving and came to me and wanted to know how come. I told him the story and he said O.K. but you have got to make those boys drive that road truck. I asked how he thought I could make them work when he couldn't. He walked away muttering: "damn boys damn boys."

He was trying to get money from the government to help operate the mine as the equipment was giving out, just before Xmas I was in the blacksmith shop I heard someone talking and looked out and saw Betts coming, talking to himself. He was saying over and over "too bad, too bad, hate to do it, damn hate to do it, say boys Merry Christmas, you are all fired". It seems he had a letter from some government department saying they would help him get equipment but no cash, so he was going to close down. It was O.K. with me as I had given my notice twice and got two raises which I didn't deserve or ask for. I was fed up with trying to handle the job as it had got to where there was nothing

to work with and I wanted to cut logs to get sawed to build the house my sister lives in. I told Betts he should keep the water pumped out in case he decided to start again but he said "never again so they let it fill up and in about a month they decided to start again and pumped the water out and the ice was about 1 ft. thick. They worked about a month pumping and drawing ice and gave up. After I quit I cut logs for the house the first of the winter and had them most cut when my son Frank got his draft notice and came home from Worthington. The day he came he got a notice not to come until further notice. He helped me finish the logs and as he was tired of loafing he wanted to know if I wanted to cut logs for Raymond Hathaway so we went down and cut 50 cords of wood and then cut logs until Frank was drafted.

After Frank left I worked for Ray for 2 years, after that I went to Pittsfield winters as my youngest boy was there with my sister. He had one leg crippled from polio and as I was away all the time days I couldn't make much of a home for him here and school conditions were much better there. The second summer he was there the Dr. said he should have his tonsils out and when they removed them they found malignant matter which proved to be Hodgkins Disease which took him within a year. At that time there was no help for it and still is very little I believe.

I came back from Pittsfield and haven't lived there since. That was in 1947, July. I worked for Raymond until that winter in the town of Monroe. My clothes would be wet at night when I finished work and had to ride home in an unheated car. They would be frozen when I got home and the house would be cold.

I got tired of it as I was living alone so I quit and cut some logs on a lot I owned and sold them to Raymond. I cut enough with a crosscut saw to pay for a chain saw (\$365.00)

As I was having trouble with another hernia I decided to have it operated on and went to the hospital in Pittsfield and had the operation and was at my sisters four days later. Within a month I was cutting logs, short days to start with.

That spring I helped Warren Hagberg sugar on what was formerly my farm. I did the boiling and while the others were gathering I would gather a few close by. I was walking on the crust with a pail of sap and one foot broke through. When the pail dropped it yanked my arm and snapped a ligament in the upper arm. The next morning I had to use the other hand to lift that arm as I couldn't put my hand up to the table. That was March and it was June before I could do any work and then not much. I went up to my lot and tried to cut some wood. I couldn't swing the axe normally but I could peck away and finally worked out a system that I could accomplish something. By the time I got what wood I wanted my arm was so that if I was careful and didn't snap it I got along fairly good. I cut logs the remainder of the summer and all the next winter. Dutch had decided to build and like the most young people he wasn't loaded with money and there was a stand of timber that was ideal for a house. I told him if he wanted to help me cut it he could have it. As he was working part time days and part time nights he helped what he could and got it cut. We got the same one to draw the logs to the mill and had them sawed and drawn back. That was done in the spring. We stuck the lumber up and

the middle of July I started helping him build. We put the frame up and closed it in with roof and chimney, then his brother did the inside finish for him.

The summer before I hurt my arm I went to Spruce Corner and built the mill that is there with some help from an odd job man they had. Ray's son Herman planned it, the piers were put down to either firm gravel or ledge and have never settled. The mill is still running with the same diesel motor which was three or four years old and that was in 1948-49. The next few years were much the same. One summer I built a building between Boudoin's house and barn, part of which was used as a milk house and part as a wood shed and back room. After I finished there I rebuilt the walls in front of the Hudson house which took some time as I had to move the part that had fallen down before I could rebuild. Before I started or had been given the job, they asked me for an estimate. I asked if they wanted an estimate or a bid. Miss Hudson's brother did the talking, he was a civil engineer, said just an estimate, that they had one and would like another but they expected me to work by the day.

Different parts of the wall had been relaid twice to my knowledge. The stones aren't the best type to make a binding wall but they, in my opinion do make the most interesting wall I ever built, there is such a variety and that were mostly originally field stone except the cap or (top stones) on the wall. For some reason I fell short of stone and had to get some drawn in. I was not supposed to build only the wall east and west but when that was finished Miss Hudson wanted the other walls relaid including a stile in the east wall, so I finally did the whole

wall and it has stood 15 years and if it stands as many more I won't see it go down. I like that wall the best of any I have built.

I sold the house I had built next to where I live, to my sister Etta who lived in Pittsfield and I intended to build opposite where Anna Naylor then owned. I had so much trouble with my drive as it washed summers and was slippery in the winter.

I planned to have a drive that I could both drive in and out down hill but my sister wanted me to stay where I was and she gave me a life lease of the place I was living in. The typing of this is a long drawn out affair as sometimes there are several days between spasms when I have something I have to do and I get skips of memory and I presume some I repeat but I don't think I have told how I came by where I live. In reading back I don't find where I sold the farm on West Hill. The last of my working at the mine the first part of World War 2 I sold the farm to a Will Wright and bought a building lot of a party named Webster off of what used to be the Herb Sears farm and as I have mentioned started to build, got the cellar in and the son that was helping was drafted so covered it and waited out the war. In reading back I find I had told of selling the farm but not of buying here. The place I now live in, one of Leon Burt's boys built near the entrance of my drive and lost interest in the chicken business before he started and got a job in Greenfield. As Leon had no use for it. he sold it to me and I dug a cellar and drew the building up with a tractor and put it where it now is. When the boy was

drafted I put sheetrock on the walls and moved in for the duration of the war. Before I got the other house finished my youngest son died and as I was building the house as a place to have him come for vacation and consider his home after he went I didn't want it. I was talking a deal with some people from near Albany and told my sister about it and right away she wanted it. I didn't want to sell to her as it want a good deal for her as she had a paying property in Pittsfield and for an older person conditions were better but one could never tell her anything and as she had made a home for the boy when I couldn't I felt I owed her something and sold to her at a loss and stayed on against my better judgement as she and I never got along good and still don't

For several years since I quit the woods I worked carpentering and mason work around town and in neighboring towns. Among the places I worked at were the school house. I put in new steps as the old ones were so narrow that a child could not open the door without getting pushed off. I told the committee if they would furnish the material I would do the work free which I did. The library steps were the same and the library trustee hired me to rebuild them. The top steps are stones that came off the old tomb in the cemetary when they took that out.

I cut what was the top step in two lengthwise and made two lower steps of it and got some stones from Betts mine for the side rails. The east end of the school house was built so close to the ground it rotted out and they got me to fix it. I had to put in two rows of cement blocks and a new sill

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and new windows. I had to order the windows as they were not standard size and while I went down to Dutches and helped him build his cellar wall out of blocks. I think we were 3 days.

I have been quite vague on dates all through these pages as the ledger that I had drawn off the various accounts of different jobs I have done got chewed up while I was in the hospital with a collapsed lung. A mouse got in and raised hell in my desk drawer where the ledger was. I have had to get most of the dates from old pocket day books I could find, some of them pretty beat up. Some I was able to get from town reports Ralph Rice had.

Since I typed the above I found a bundle of old day books that I carried in my pocket when I worked. I put my day's time down as I worked irregular hours and made notes concerning the work to refer to the next morning, things I would want the next day. In going through them it brought to mind a lot of things I had forgotten.

Among them was a job I did for the Balduzos. I put novelty siding on the south end of their barn. I had it done up to the hay doors in the peak and was working on a very hot day and the sun hit that new lumber like a stove. I had stood the boards on end on a platform lower down so I could reach them. I was feeling pretty hot and when I went to get more boards and looked down, the ground looked like the waves on a pond and I felt like I was floating. After I got down I got in the shade and lay there for quite sometime as I was sick and dizzy. I finally got so I could drive home but it was nearly a week before I could stay in the sun at all. Before I

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could go back, Guy and the boys finished what little was left as Guy wanted the boys to paint the new siding. It was after that I relaid the Hudson walls. Another similar job I did was on the barn at Shirley and Eddie Shepherds. I put new siding on the side near the road and on the east end. On the east end my son Frank helped me as it was too high to do alone. I also built a terrace wall at the end of the house facing the road. My son Donald and I worked the most of one winter in what was a porch and wood shed, making a rumpus room of them.

We had to truss the roof as there was to be no posts in the room. The walls were uneven and as the room was to be finished with paneling it had to have girts put between the studs and strapping on the ceiling so on the whole it was a slow job. Don did the most of the work as I had a disc that had slipped so that I could only work by spells and Don did all the finish work as he was very good at finish work. The last job he did was to build a cherry wood bar that is worth seeing. That was the last work he did as he died not long after.

I also put a floor in an upstairs room for them, also floored part of the barn and put up some shelves for Eddie's stock. I helped Ralph Rice move what was meant to be a chicken coop from near their house to a camp where the barn once was and they annexed it to the camp. I also did some work on that and a building she used for a garage. I did a couple of jobs at Waban farm in 1958 for Will McColouch, jacked up a porch that had dropped onto the ground in front. It had to be raised 2 ft. and pipe post put under and a new cherry wood floor laid.

The next year I did quite a lot of work on a tenement house that some one had broken holes in the plaster and in places through the lath. It had been a very nice farmhouse sometime and still was except the downstairs tenement. I don't think anyone lived there after I fixed it up as the farm changed hands not long after and that house looks as if it was on its way down. I did some work for some friends of theirs in South Ashfield the next year. Made a storm door and put on storm windows and did some clapboarding. Also did some work for Walter Dufrane, a piece of sill and framed and cased a new front door and put in a new window in an upstairs bedroom. I put another one in the same room but a different place 3 or 4 years later. Tony Pease had a wall under his porch that the stones were coming loose and he asked if I could fix it so I pointed it up with cement mortar and then he wanted some wall around the yard straightened and leveled. The next year I shingled the ell on one side. Margaret had some kind of flowers under the eaves so I had to roof over them with chicken wire. I put it up about 4ft. but they grew so tall that a few grew through the wire but we got it off with no damage. It took longer to do the job than I expected as I had to put in some new roof boards. Tony wanted the front of the house clapboarded and insulated. When I got the old boarding off, the boards underneath were old hemlock and were not put on close together. The type of insulation he got was the kind you pour so I told him we should put felt paper on before we put the insulation in but he said he wanted

to see if it went all the way down. There was an open place at the bottom that I called his attention to but he said it want large enough to bother and it didn't. He poured in nearly half a bag of insulation and wondered why it didn't fill up. I told him it probably would only it was running out the bottom. He asked why I didn't tell him so I told him he said that hole wouldn't bother and it didn't bother me. He couldn't say much. He want to bad to work for but sometimes he would get nasty but if you pointed out to him it was the wrong way to be he would walk away and forget it.

I later shingled the back side of the ell and the back of the main house leaked sometimes so he had that shingled. There was asbestos shingles on that. I took the asbestos off as I could shingle up to what I had time each day which was uncertain as I had to put in new boards some of the way. It wasn't hard to take the asbestos off whole as it can't be nailed tight as it is brittle so by using a flat steel with a bend like a pinch bar I could lift it off and carry it down whole which was easier than breaking it and having to clean it up off the lawn. I asked Tony what to do with it and he said whatever I damn pleased so I took it down to Dutches and he put it on his garage roof. It wouldn't have leaked on Tony's house only the lower part of the house roof was built at a different slope and where the angle changed the asbestos wouldn't bend so when the kids that lived there ran around on it it broke enough to leak but not enough to show. I got a job and Dutch got a roof that will last as long as there is a building under it.

The water came through Ton'ys cellar wall and he wanted me to fix that so I cemented it up which isn't a fast job. Unless you put in a heavy wall (6 or 8 in. thick) the studs have to be set up at whatever thickness you do want the wall, allowing for the thickness of a board and if there are stones that stick out a lot more than others either break them off or drive them in. Quite often there are bulges in the wall and you have to set the studs or uprights to allow for that so you can't

always make a straight wall without using excessive cement a greater part of the way to get enough over the bulge. Not many want to go to that expence. It is also a must to put in a cement floor or the water follows the wall down and comes under the wall. I did all but one inside wall of his cellar and that was around an old chimney base, also poured a floor. I found a good door step for his front door and placed it for him.

My last job for' him was to replace a soft wood porch floor with a cherry.wood floor. The porch is on one side and one end which is quite a bit of porch. I did one side of a cellar wall int the old Wilcut house (the south wall) and the alley to the hatchway also the hatch and fixed the steps. It was late fall when i did that job, I also made new covers for the hatch. I got the mixer and tools out of the cellar in the dark and loaded and went home. I was afraid it would snow before I got out as it was starting when I was loading and it is a poor place to be as they didn't plow that road then and there is a hill either way out but I made it as it had just started snowing. I built a terrace wall along the east side of the lawn in front of the house, and put the steps and a stone walk in

the center of it. I also raised the wall around the wall around the lawn in back. There is a small cellar under the north wing of the house where there was a water tank but there was no wall in back.

The other walls were rather open and I insulated them and put ply wood over it. I built a wall in the back with a door to a crawl hole in it. I did quite a lot of work for Mrs. (B) Carpenter, I put a foundation for and set up a 300 gallon water tank. Also a foundation for a furnace and put posts under the kitchen where someone had cut a beam to get a water pipe in and let the floor sag. When I was making the form for the foundation for the water tank I struck a post with a hatchet and it went in out of sight, so I tried all of them and only one of them was safe. I told Mrs. C. about it but she said it couldn't be as they were new just a few years before. I tried to tell her what caused them to go so quick but she couldn't see it. A little later her brother-in law was up and went down cellar to see the new water tank and saw where I had cut into the post to see how bad they were and told Billie she better do something about them, so she had me replace the old ones which I did with cherry posts that I had peeled.

I did some minor jobs inside the house, the biggest was to put a hearth in the kitchen and set up an open faced stove where she had set up a fireplace mantle she had bought. It involved cutting through a wooden partition and fitting a sheet of cement board with a stove pipe hole cut in it, getting the right level to clear a 20 gal. iron kettle set in a brick arch

and still keep the pipe low enough to not burn the mantle. The only way I could dope out to get that level was the thickness of a brick. I put a brick under each leg of the stove and asked Mrs. C. how she liked that. She didn't approve it at all. I told her it was the only way I could figure out unless she had a hearth laid. I told her I didn't think one on top of the floor would stay as there was no cellar under the kitchen and if she closed the house in the winter it would heave and loosen but she said it was just what she wanted. I am not good with brick and don't like to work with them and told her to get someone that was good to do it but she insisted that I do 'it. She said if I could think it up I could do it. Well I built it and it is still there.

Fred Tirrel came in as I was finishing the hearth and was highly indignant because Mrs. C. didn't wait for him to set the stove up. She told him it had been a month since he was going to do it and she hadn't seen him and she thought the reason was he didn't know how.

Soon after I had finished some people came and asked if they could see the hearth that Fred Tirrel designed. Mrs. C. told them they must have the wrong place as the only one she had I had designed and built. They asked if she was sure I didn't get the idea from Fred? and she told them Fred never had the idea until he saw that one. It happened these people knew me and asked me about it later and I told them how it was. The whole thing was no big deal, when you see an imitation fireplace in the form of an open face stove sitting in front of a fireplace mantle anyone would think of a hearth if one wanted to go that far. I did some putter work for her after that, just little

jobs. I did relay the top of a chimney from her kitchen, just from roof level up. As I took the staging down that I had to work on I was very careful about pulling all the nails as in throwing the lumber down you can get scratched pretty deep. The last 2 by 4 I threw had a spike that I had missed and it caught my glove and as I was standing near the edge of the roof I went along with the stick. The ground was all cluttered up with lumber I had thrown off except about a spot 4 ft. square and I landed on my feet on that but with such a jolt that my glasses flew off and nearly everything out of my pockets.

After I picked up my things I went up and swept the roof off. I was lucky that time. I did do some cellar drainage for her and put in a trap to stop the odor from the street drain from the cellar. It is a simple affair, only has to have one or two pails of water a year where you don't have a steady flow of water.

As I have said somewhere before in this mess that I lost a lot of dates and some details of jobs when the mice got into my ledger and chewed hell out of it. I carried a pocket note book at work and put down my hrs. of work when I quit as I worked odd hrs. When I worked alone, which was quite often I would work late as I was in the same position as the man that was told he could go home as he was fired. He told the boss he didn't want to go home as he didn't have anything to do there. A night I would put my time and any details that I wanted to keep as a reference. I did resent the mice living on my record, and why they chose that particular book as there were two others similar to it with records of road work with it. In 1961 I started doing work for the Dr. Sidney Crewes of N.Y. City. I built a wall at

the east end of the house where a bank wall dropped down 15 or 20 ft. and they were afraid someone would walk off in the night. The wall was 30 in. high and 2 ft. wide, built mostly of local stone off their own place. I worked for them in '61, 62, 63 and 64 mostly from July to September. Built a terrace wall in front of the house and across the west end, also relaid some bank wall above the drive and two short entrance walls at the drive. These shouldn't have been there.

The Dr. and I built a three car garage the other side of Lincoln Hill and later I built a wall along the road on the bank and around the end of the parking space. The old barn shed was leaning down the hill and the roof was nearly gone so I pulled the shed back plumb with an old stump puller I had and braced it after which we put a new roof on and new-boarded one side and both ends. We also built an addition on the camp or guest house. They sold this property and bought in Hillsdale, New York. I was down there in 1967 and built 110ft. of wall for them and put in a brick hearth in the kitchen. The next job (68) was to put a two pitch roof over a flat one and build another stall for a car on the end. It was 40 ft. over all, not a bad job as there was the flat roof to work on except it was hot as hell. I stayed up too long and nearly passed out. It was 3 days before I dared go up again and the sun still bothers me.

The Mrs. took me riding around a lot of country, we drove through Chatham where I worked at one time and the only thing that looked natural was an old hotel. In '69 I went down and built a short piece of wall in front of where they had an old

one removed and laid a short walk to the front door and primed some clapboards the carpenter didn't come back to do. That was my last work I did for them. I was down for a visit last summer ('70) but didn't do any work.

I am so near asleep I guess I better quit. My work for the Crewes was mostly between July and September, their vacation time so that left me quite a bit of time for other jobs in our so called summer. Some I have mentioned and some not. As I have told my records were chewed by mice so I lost many dates and a lot of notes and as I worked at the same places in succeeding years I can remember the rotation in which they were done but not the date. In some instances it would have helped to have them.

Some of this will be a repeat. For Shirley Roberts, I put a new roof on the ell part of the house. A year later in the winter my son Donald and I did over the inside of the ell. It had been built for a woodshed with a porch in front and someone had taken the partition out between the porch and shed. They took all but one stud out before it came to them the roof would cave in. As Shirley didn't want any posts in the room we had to truss the roof and part of the shed had a cement wall 2 ft. high that was

both rough and crooked it was no small job to get it ready for a blond panelling. Don did all the finish work as he was hard to beat at finish. I had been in an auto accident and had a neck injury. I had doctored with several doctors and taken different treatments and would get relief but no cure. The pain would gradually come back and each time get worse. At that time I was being treated by an osteopath? who was also an M.D. He gave me a perscription for some tablets to ease the pain. Some days I

couldn't do much but I managed to keep ahead with the rough work.

We couldn't work as it was a bad winter and we wanted to get home before dark as we would have to shovel enough driveway to get the truck off the road as when they plowed they would fill where we had parked and they didn't plow drives then. The last thing Don did was make a cherry wood bar. I found enough clear lumber in a pile of reject cherry for the top but the front and end the lumber had black spots in but when finished and stained looked O.K. That was the winter of 60-61. Don got through but I did some work putting sealer on the wood work. Two years later. I built a terrace wall at the end of the house facing the road where there had been a tangle of bridal wreath. Bill Whitehouse dug it out and drew the stone for the walls.

Nice wall stones but a little coarse to make an attractive wall some would say. A year or so later I put a new floor in an upstairs room and took out a partition. As it is only a story and 1/2 house the rooms are rather low and it was in the summer and hot. I couldn't hardly take it but had to get it so they could sleep there that night. The following year I put new siding on the side of the barn next to the road and as the old barn was out of shape and the old boards unlevel it was slow work. I also made new doors. When the road was rebuilt it was raised and the barn is so near the road the doors just clear in the summer. In the winter they give trouble. The next year they wanted the east end boarded over the old floor in part of the barn and put in some heavy shelves for Eddie for his electrical fixtures and rebuilt the stable over

for cattle and built a sawdust bin, also made a new stable door and fixed windows up and down stairs. I also jacked up a shed and spliced a post and re-laid some wall under it. Herbie Smith had his trailer moved when Ralph Rice moved and he had a foundation built and they put the trailer on it and left.

After Herbie's trailer was set there was a gap between the foundation and the trailer body of the width of the frame, about 5 in. In the fall Herbie asked me if I would fill that in for him. It was so cold by then that I had to salt the mortar and I can't do as finished work with mortar in that weather as in warm weather but it stayed. They had dug a well to put the pump and pressure tank in front of the trailer that should have been in back as it would have been out of sight and on the warm side. They made a concrete cover for it that would take several men to move. It was below ground level so I raised the wall and made a heavy wood cover and a roof over it to not only keep the water out but so he could uncover it in the winter if necessary and it would be dry to work. Too bad it isn't in back.

The reason I don't keep these different jobs in their proper sequence is due to my losing my ledger, not that I imagine it matters, so when the Trustees of the Hudson House asked me to fix the cellar walls so the water wouldn't run through the cellar I looked at it and took the job. There was an old hot air heating system in the cellar that had air ducts along the east wall two ft. wide and hung about a foot below the ceiling and as near the wall as possible. The smaller ducts took off of that and ran in various directions. The cellar was just a comfortable

height to work in without the ducts. I got Herbie Smith to help me and as he is short and a good worker he made ideal help. We used a sand and cement mix and as there was only one corner that was high enough to work in that had a window I had the sand and cement spouted in there and set the mixer up.

The water pipe came in on the opposite side of the cellar but that was a small item. It was a very cold winter that year and the furnace was quite a distance from where the water came through the wall. The caretaker had two light bulbs hung close to the pipe. The bulbs were hung on a drop cord hung over a nail and as he said he was going to put an insulated plywood box around it we didn't pay much attention to it except to keep the lights on. One day I had gone to Cummington to get an elbow to put in the cellar drain and the bulbs had slipped down low enough to hit the plastic pipe and melt a hole in it. When I got back one of the men had been over and got Gena Carver to come over as neither of them knew how to shut the water off. No harm done except to fix the pipe. Herbie and I did all the wall job except two days digging we had another man. That I think was the winter of 65-66. The form lumber was oiled as we used over again and scraped it between times of using and Herbie was one of the best to clean lumber I ever had. We started Dec. 21 and finished Feb. 10. The next year I cleaned the cellar bottom. Where the water had come through the wall in back it had brought dirt in over a period of years to a depth of 8 in. in some places. I had Herbie Smith and Harold Packard to help. The dirt had to be wheeled to west side where there was an entrance about 4-1/2 ft. high, the

only outside entrance to the cellar. As it was about 3-1/2 ft. from the cellar floor up to this door the dirt all had to be shoveled out from there. The trustees had a concrete floor. poured over about 2/3 of the cellar. Why the rest wasn't cemented I don't know as it waft covered with crushed stone but the chairman said he didn't care about the part. It makes the job look as if they ran out of money..We started Jan. 26 and finished Feb. 8. I snapped a ligament in my right arm prying up a piece of frozen dirt in one corner, the only place it froze in the cellar. It was in a corner near the cellar drain where it got a cold draft. Feb. 14 I went to Eddie Shepards and worked in his barn. Finished March 4. The next Job was at Eddie Shepard's which I have already mentioned.

After that I started a job on the parsonage. The ell part of the house was built into the ground. The drive had been raised into the barn so that the water ran in the door to the room that used to be the library. The floor was built so close to the ground that they had rotted out and so had part of the floor. I had to put a cement wall from the kitchen to the barn at the same pitch as the drive and raise it enough to grade away from the building. Also put a cement wall in the back (north) and west side as water came in all around. As there was no chance for ventilation under the floor a wood floor would rot out in no time so I poured a cement slab and I had to eliminate the door as the wall I put in front was going to make it too low and was unnecessary as that room opened into the kitchen, so I replaced

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it with a window. The room beyond was two steps higher and as the wall I put on the east side was higher I did away with a door in that part that was nailed up and put in a window. I had to clapboard the east side as I had stripped the whole outside.

The next year I jacked up the porch and put in cement foundation for the sills, put in a new under frame and an oak floor, also rebuilt the hatchway walls. I did fix enough of the barn floor for Mr. Cary's car.

Two years later I took up the rest of the floor and dug out in back (north end) and put in a wall and also on the west side. I leveled the floor on the west side as it slanted 8 in. from the center.

Later in the summer Dutch and I drew and spread grits for the drive when they tarred it. The next year I got 8 yds. of loam and graded up along the drive and grassed over a ditch that had been dug. In the spring of '71 the cellar flooded and they asked me if I would look after putting in a new drain as I had charge of connecting the sink and cellar drains through the street I knew where to find that one and as none of the help had shown up I dug down to where the cellar drain hit the street drain and uncovered 3 two ft. length of tile and took them up. They were partially plugged but a trickle of water was coming through. I hadn't been working long before I began to get advice but no help until Leon Burt came by. I asked him to help and he did and was good help. I tried to run an iron rod up the tile but it struck dead after a few feet. I was advised to get a back hoe which I had thought of but there were shrubs on both sides that I didn't want to wreck. Another idea was to get the fire truck to put pressure on it and blow it out but I didn't think it would work

as it seemed so solid. It was fortunate I didn't as a few feet farther on we found the drain from the septic tank was connected to the one we were digging up and if we had put pressure on it we would have cleaned the ceptic tank back into the bathroom.

We finally got it dug up and the upper end of the tile was plugged almost solid. We put in new Orangeburg tile with a removable trap and catch basin at the upper end. We put foundations under the pressure tank and pump.

Later the trustees wanted 4 in. of crushed stone spread over the cellar floor so I did with the help of Douglas Jackson and Mark Hathaway. The stone had to be dumped outside and shoveled in and then spread to the required depth. It was a miserable job as that cellar is so low there are very few places one can

stand up straight in due to air ducts and water pipes and low beams. The cellar is only used for heat and water purpose and the water in the springtime comes in on all sides except the west, even the driven well overflows and runs through the wall. Later I had a shallow trench plowed in back hoping to divert some of the surface water. We did this job in the spring and summer of '70. Leon died before we put the stone in.

As I have mentioned earlier that the records of my earlier work was lost I have put them down as they came to me, not that it matters. So some that I will put down now are afterthoughts. I built a wall in Ashfield, at Rozells, the first place out of Plainfield. I got a load of stone in Goshen from George Judd and by splitting them and trimming the edges it made a nice looking wall. Dorothy McMahon saw the wall and wanted a stone wall. There was a wall near where they wanted the new one so

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they moved the stones back and I rebuilt the wall, I also built some shelves in the cellar and put a stone floor in the porch. I have found a few pages in an old day book dated '67. In it is an item "67 Ralph Ellison, roof" which brought to mind that when they first came up here they had a leaky roof on the guest house. Someone told them about me but i was busy so I told them i would try and find someone to fix it for them but everyone else was busy too so I hwkped him shingle the roof. He was good help and good company. Small roof, short job,. 18 hrs. Another short job, Fred Jenkins 36 hrs. on barn, details lost in ledger. I also found some notes on work for Mrs. Copley. I remember building a wall under her porch and making lattice for the front of the porch, also doing some work on a camp she had. I think I

mentioned doing work on a building she used for a garage. As I started typing this mess to pass away the winter it has been typed a lot like the weather has been, erratic and mostly as it comes to my mind, not that it matters.

I have mentioned working for Mrs. Carpenter, just some of the major jobs, there were numerous little things that she had a neighbor that would promise and I would do the work. I also did quite a lot of work for Mrs. Romer at various times, some that I have mentioned and several I didn't. (don't take that wrong). I have done various small jobs such as helped Cliff S. put up a scaffold floor in his barn and fixed the floor near hIs barn door. I helped Bob Billings put a brace under his mothers barn roof. Bob and his brother-in-law did most of the work, I gave a few suggestions and helped dispose of the noon meal. I don't think I have mentioned building a couple of walls for

Ed Glasspool, I think if I had typed that name before I would remember it. He (Ed) came to see me about building the first one but I was on another job and couldn't do it until I finished that one..He wanted it done right then as he wanted to put up a paddoc fence. I told him I finished one job before I started another.Then he told me another man told him he would have to wait and that he told that man he was going to stay there until he said he would come right away. I told him he had better go home and get a tent as he was going to be there quite sometime. He decided to wait at home.

I finally built that wall and the next year I built a low wall as a border for a flower bed 16 in. high. One neighbor I have had for years is Tom Packard. I think he his about 16 yrs. younger than I am so as boys and young men we were not at all close. He father was an old type carpenter among other things. When I was 4 yrs. old he came to work for my father one winter repairing a barn that the ground timbers had rotted out. He and my father cut the logs and my father dragged them to the barn with a horse where he and Tom's father hewed them. My father scored them which means striking in with an axe every 6 or 8 inches on the side to be hewed. A chalk line has been made to hew to. Tom's father would follow with a broad axe and hew the chips off, following the chalk line. They put new timbers under the whole barn. It was all done in the winter time.

Back to Tom, his father had a farm not far from the one my father bought in Plainfield. Tom's father died and Tom took the farm over with a heavy mortgage and dug out from under in spite of three fires.He got on the board of Assessors in 1943 and

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has been on ever since. I served 16 yrs. and resigned in 1970. Tom has been Chairman of the Board nearly ever since his second year. It isn't a desirable job as it is under paid and you don't get many compliments. He and I had one thing in common. We were both interested in the lay of the land in the town and

surrounding country. We both prowled a greater part of the town and quite a bit of adjoining towns and compared notes. In the past 2 or 3 years we have both tapered off, age may have something to do with it but in driving around back roads and making short excursions from the truck it is difficult to find old boundaries as so much of the land is grown to brush and wood. I live on a

hill with a good view but one can't see much open land.

The farm I mentioned among the first pages of this typing that had been neglected for nearly 50 yrs. I had cleared of brush and old apple trees has gone back farther than it had when I bought it. One lot of 15 acres is the only clear land left and that hasn't been cut over in sometime. It makes one feel as if they had wasted a lot of their life. There is a saying "one generation builds and the next tears down but it hurts when you live to see it happen."

There are a few that speak of "the good old times". About the only thing I remember that was better were the people. At that time people were more dependent on each other. The main trouble was very few had a reliable income but I do think one appreciated what they had, all but the hard luck.

I have mentioned different log jobs that my father and I did. As I was only ten years old when we moved here I didn't do much logging for a few years. When I was 12, my father got me a light axe.

I had been asking to go to the woods with him as I liked to chop and if I stayed home I had to take care of the barn work and buck wood. I have swung a pick and a shovel in a hot gravel bank a lot of days but that was a vacation compared to using a buck saw. If I thought that when I leave this world that I was going to that place I have been told to go to so many times and would have to use a bucksaw I think I would try hard for a transfer. The farm we had there was a 35 A. wood lot on, about 1/2 of it was old growth timber which George Wilcutt liked for his mill. He owned the property where Hugh Richards and a friend own and the mill near it.

When we came here he was making whip butts that went to Westfield, Mass.

Automobiles put the whip business out so Willcutt went into making skewers. He preferred the big logs as he sawed his stock 3 in. thick then resawed on a gang saw to skewer thickness and run through a rounder, than cut to skewer length and put in a drum and revolved until smooth, then packed and shipped. My father got \$10.00 per.M log measure for his own logs and started taking jobs at \$7.00 per.M delivered at the mill. The price got up to \$8.00 the last one we did. We worked 3 winters on . Some of it was rough and steep. As I was the youngest driver I got the rough and steep. The men were all older than me but were all used to the woods. A few years later I took a job logging for a portable mill and couldn't get a man that was good in the woods. I worked in the woods nearly every winter as I liked the work. When it was crosscut saws and axes it was

pleasant in the woods, not too noisy, you could talk with who

you were working with. If you were driving it was hard, rough work but not too noisy. The last I worked in the woods it was chain saws and tractors and trucks, you seldom saw any birds around. The trees used to be cut in strips, the tops on each side and the logs left in the middle. Now they fall them anywhere and a tractor drives over the tops and gets them where they find them. I finally got fed up with coming home wet and cold to a cold house as we working up near Vermont line and it was a cold ride home, so I quit and went to Pittsfield and got a job for the winter in a paper mill. The work there was easy but I didn't like being inside. I worked there 2 winters and my son that lived in Pittsfield died, so I quit Pittsfield and the paper mill. They offered me a job until retirement, not due to any special ability but I was steady. The retirement was not much there at that time.

I made a chair out of crate lumber while I was on nights and the Co. president came through and tried it, he came while I was down with rolls of paper and asked the man I worked with who made it. Pat told him I did but he didn't know me (we didn't belong to the same club) but he waited until I came back and asked where I got the idea and I told him from sitting on uncomfortable chairs. He asked if I cared if he had the mill carpenter get a pattern of it and I told him there was no patent on it.

The next summer I was by his place and he had some on his terrace. Pat, the man I worked with got a kick out of it as the department boss had told me to take it to the mill dump. I told him O.K. should I do it or wait until I went off the shift?

He said it wouldn't take long, why not do it now. I told him I thought it would save him getting a helper for Pat. When I throw that chair on the dump I am going to keep on going as this is the only machine that don't have anywhere from a bench to a bed and I am not going to stand up for no reason. He left soon after without firing me. The chair was there when I left. They were a nice bunch to work with on the whole.

I think I will mention one girl? (she was 32) but didn't feel it. She was rather tall but well built and she rode the same bus I did, also would come up to our room when she had to kill time. Her work was the 'hurry and wait' kind and our machine was the only one in that room and wasn't a noisy machine several used to goof off up there. She was well developed upstairs. She would sit in my chair with her hands back of her head and it would bother me to watch the machine. She had an odd name that I never could remember so I called her Hi-pockets when I referred to her when she wasn't present. Someone told her of it and who started it and she nailed me. She pretended to be sore but she still stayed friendly. She could tell an off color joke and not make it sound filthy and sometimes I would get brave and tell one but had to keep my back turned so she wouldn't see me blush.

After I came back I went to work for my cousin again in the woods mostly but would fill in wherever needed. The sons wanted a big team to draw at the fairs. I had broken in one team that I liked to drive. They were not too big and would do anything I asked and I didn't ask them anything they couldn't do. Then they kept getting more and bigger until cleaning them was like raking

a garden and they were so tall I almost had to jump twice to get the harness on one. I finally told them I had handled horses long enough, I was 56 yrs.old then and those horses didn't have any respect for my age. I quit that winter and started cutting off a lot I owned. The next summer I went to work in the mine.

A contractor had the job of building the road from where Arlan Roberts lives to the Brick store. It had to be policed until 12 P.M. and that shift started at 4 P.M. Nobody wanted it so I said if I could fix it at the mine I would take it. I started 1/2 hr. earlier at the mine and as I was drilling and blasting most of the time it didn't matter. That was a tiresome job as after 8 P.M. there wasn't enough traffic to keep one awake but it added a few \$ that I could use as I was just getting my head above water from Dr's, hospital, and undertakers bills as I was trying to build where my sister now lives. I have thought about the part of my life I have spent in Plainfield. There are the buildings that Panzeri? owns, and where the Leders (I know that is wrong) the buildings where I live and I helped Dutch what I could with his. Those buildings and some stone walls are about all there is to show I have been this way.

I haven't read back over what I have typed, afraid I would be discouraged so I know I have repeated and skipped but as I am just doing this to kill time through a dismal winter and don't expect anyone will read it unless they have a lot of curiosity and I don't think anyone will stay with it very long. These are just a few things that came to my mind as I sit wondering if I would feel any deader if I stopped breathing than I do now.

I had a spell of 24hr. flu that can't tell time as it has hung on for three days.

As I sat in what I call my sleeping chair as it isn't comfortable to just sit in unless you want to lay way back. The only way I can use it is to lay back so I do sleep in it a lot when I have a night I can't get to sleep in bed. Now what ran through my mind. I was three years old when these things happened.

1. A cousin of mine stopped in. He was from Windsor and we were living in Dalton then, and as was the custom then Mother made him a lunch but when she laid out the cutlery ghe forgot the spoon so when he sweetened his coffee he stirred it with his knife. Mother noticed that and was upset about it but he told her the coffee was just as sweet stirred with a knife as a spoon. Why think of that after 77 yrs.

2. There was a man that lived up on Flintstone Mt. , I think in the town of Windsor, on what had been the family farm but he lived there alone and was referred to as a hermit. He was supposed to have a lot of money and when he had to buy he alwaysseemed to have plenty. His name was Ike Stetson and he was a very distant relative of Cliff Stetson. He was well liked by those that knew him but kept mostly to himself. He and my father were friendly in an odd way. He would come to our house at long intervals and eat with us. What stayed in my mind was he never took his cap off. The type of the cap he wore was called a Scotch cap. They were made of double thickness wool cloth with no lining, they had a high crown and when pulled down all the way the visor came to the eyebrows on the average person.

People said Ike wore his the whole year and would cut his hair off around the edge of it with a jack-knife. He kept some livestock but no horse, cut his grass by hand and got it in the same way. The story was he had a pig 6 or 7 yrs. old and when asked why he didn't kill it and get a young one he said he wanted to keep a pig and might as well keep that one as he had kind or used to it. I never could quite believe that one.

3. My father was in with another man on the job of drawing stone for the present Government Mill. It was all horse work at that time and father had one team he favored and drove himself. I was going to Pittsfield with them on a high box wagon that had a high seat and as we came into Pittsfield we had to use an overpass to the R.R. The team were afraid of trains and they also liked to run away and as we passed over the tracks a yard engine that was standing quiet under the bridge blew off steam and we took off. My father was expecting them to run. He rolled me over into the back of the wagon into that deep body and we took a ride. There was about a mile or straight sandy road after we got across the tracks and by the time we reached the end of that the horses had got run enough.

4. Mother had a friend that lived in Windsor that came some times and stayed over. Her name as I knew it was Tillie Vining. She had dark red hair and wasn't a very pretty woman but very likable and nice to small kids too. She came one time in the winter I remember. At that time women wore gaiters over shoe rubbers that buttoned up the side to the knee. Tillie came in and after the usual female greetings Mother told her to take off

her things so she started to shed.

As I was glad to see her I stuck around and when she took her gaiters off she was more careless than she would have been if I had been 30 instead of 3. The rest I don't remember except from hearing it told so many times that I put my hand on her knee and said "Tillie can I feel of your leg". It don't sound reasonable for me to say that at any age. There is one more person I remember whose name was Pomp Huse. He was a black man and a friend of my fathers. At that time we lived on Pine St. and Pomp lived quite a bit beyond, but in the summer he would come by in the evening if Father was working in the garden and would help and they would visit. Kid fashion if they were sitting and talking I hung around. Pomp would talk with my father and be making animals and some birds with his fingers. I have seen it done in shadow since but I don't think I ever saw it done better, at least it never amused me as much as that did.

5. I had been to the store with a neighbor girl, she was about 16, I guess; and the grocer gave me a pear; and on the way home we met an older boy and his brother and while the girl and the older boy were talking, the younger boy asked for a bite of my pear. I gave it to him and he chewed off all his mouth would hold and then rolled the pear in the sand. The big brother saw what he was doing and grabbed the kid so I told him and he shook and slapped the kid pretty good and they wanted to go back to the store and get me another pear but I told them I didn't like pears was why I hadn't eaten that one. Everyone laughed except the kid that had got slapped. Why these things came to mind after years of not thinking of them seems rather odd when I forget so many things that happened

recently.

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May 5, 1971

Last night I came home from Cliff Stetson's about 10 P.M., parked the truck between the two houses and came in the house. I took the keys out of the car and couldn't find them this morning. I nearly always put the keys in my right side pocket and as I didn't go out again I can't imagine what happened. I painted the wall where the spare keys hung so had to move them but can't remember where I put them, you might think I was getting senile. I got so nervous about the keys that I took a walk up to my old spring which is running a brook and then I went on west above Miller's "on-A-Hill" camp, then northerly parallel to "116" but on top of the hill back of the Gilberts. There is a wall that runs N.W. by S.E., a line wall. Above that wall the snow is gone until you get back in the soft wood some and there it deepens to about 1 ft. on an average. It was still hard enough to walk on. I came to where a large spring ran down and spread out from 10 to 15 ft. so I followed that up, E.N.E. to what was once a young orchard that has been neglected nearly ever since it was beginning to bear. It now belongs to a Theirault that bought

Maggie's farm (Balduzo) and borders on what was a 40 A. mowen. About all of it is still tillable and lays nice, has a nice south slope, very gentle slope.

The south end comes to the woods north of my place. I am in hopes to do some walking this summer and thought I would start near home to see how it went, it didn't tire me as much as I expected. The part of the farm that was pasture is mostly wooded, nearly all pine and spruce with a little hemlock, some of it is large enough to cut but I think if it was cut as the largest is on the west side and if that was cut it would let the wind in

and I imagine blow down quite a lot of what was left. A year ago I went up when the power line was building through and on Cusson's side of the line there is some good hemlock. There is very little good timber left that I know of in town. On the farm owned by Seely's on West hill, in the north pasture there is some timber that was too small to cut when it was cut over in 1938 or '39. Also quite a few scattered large pine left as they didn't take pine at that time. They should be cut as they will be going by.

On the place owned by a Goldman there is a nice stand of soft wood timber that has never been cut. into. He wouldn't sell on account of the sale tax but I have heard he wants to sell the property now, due to age I guess. There was a stand of hemlock on Chuddy's what was formerly Ralph Rices near Gilranni's line, not a large amount but as I remember. I never gave it too much attention as I came through it just at dusk and thought I would go back later but didn't. My mother gave me what had been her blueberry lot. It was a lot of 47 acres on Bluff St. My father bought it for pasture and Mother used to pick berries there to sell. She got the idea that the sheep were hurting the bushes and as we had gone out of the sheep business he sold it to her and we stopped pasturing it. It then began growing up to pines and in a few years the pines shaded the bushes so they gradually stopped bearing.

When Mother bought the lot the deal had to go through a third party so she bought it in my sister's name and my sister with a \$ sign before her eyes didn't transfer it to me. Mother made money off the lot letting pickers in and also picking to sell

but the bushes were getting choked out so that pickers didn't come but the tax bill did so then my sister wanted me to get the lot transferred to me but I had tax bills enough on non-paying property so she had it transferred herself and I was stuck with it for a number of years. I tried to give it away at one time in the depression but no deal. I did cut my fire wood there beside the road but there was not much hard wood back in the lot so it lay idle for about 20 years.

During World War 2, the first part, I had cut and had sawed lumber to build a house where my sister lives so I could have a place near the store and Post Office when I got to be my present age (80). Also where my youngest son could come as he was a partial cripple, one bad leg due to polio. He was naturally an outdoor type but of course never going to be able to make a living in the hard way his brothers and I did but he did like the town as he liked to pond fish and liked the country, but he died at the age of 14, after I had built the house and I lost interest in the house and sold it to my sister which was a mistake or at least it was a mistake my staying here.

Well I have wandered off the subject as bad as I do talking, I started to give a rundown on the lot Mother gave me after it had lost its value which she didn't know when she left it to me. The young soft wood that had started had gone on growing and as pine grows fast some of that was over 2 ft. at the butt equal to some of our local ladies? only it grew faster and was softer. There was a clump of spruce in one corner when my father bought the lot, pole stuff we called it but this had got to a size where it would make lumber to frame a house.

I cut about 12M. of the

spruce and pine for the house and had it sawed. One of my boys and II had got the cellar in when he got drafted so I roofed the cellar and it sat until after the war. I worked at a saw mill job or mostly in the woods during the war except 2 winters in a paper mill, I didn't mind the work in the paper mill but didn't like inside so quit after 2 winters and went back into the woods. The mill finally moved up near Vermont line and after a year of traveling so far in the winter I quit and started cutting my lot off.

When the trees were about half matured we had two ice storms one after the other, and as pine is brittle it broke the tops off of nearly all of it. It grew new tops but they grew with an offset to the original body and were too scrubby for lumber besides being crooked so mostly it was only one or two logs to a tree where there should have been 3 or 4 but I cut about 100M besides two bills of house lumber and sold the lot stripped for \$200.00. The lot was so full of brush and dead blueberry bushes it was slow cutting. I figured I either got paid for my time of cutting and gave them the logs or got paid for the logs and cut them for fun but finally called it.

I got my tax money back and called the sale price the profit. While on the subject of timber, by spells, Bert Hardwick has a lot I want to look at when the snow finally gets gone.

I got curious about a lot that was bought onto Cheddass farm by Malcolm Dalrymple. He decided to sell it and as I wanted more pasture I bargained for it. He came to me before we closed the deal and said his father wanted it so I lost it. I think I would have kept it when I sold my farm if I had got it. I

thought about it the other day when I was over that way and went and looked it over. When I bargained for it most of it was practically clear, some grey birch and a few small pine. It is all grown up now, some pine large enough for logs but very little underbrush and the land is quite smooth for wild land. At one time there had been farm buildings on the lot but a part of the farm had been sold off, the part across the road (east). It must have been a much more pleasant farm to work than a lot as it was either level or a gentle slope. I can't understand why so many farms that lay like that are let go back and a lot of steep and ledgy farms were kept in use.

There were very few surface stones in sight and the walls were far apart which would indicate not too many stones in the soil, but the stones in the walls were nice wall stones, almost flag type. It is still a nice lot, the most attractive part is a little back from the road.

#3 The road from old Rod & Gun Club to N. Central. Goes due East & West

5-17-71

I went over near the Rod & Gun Club to where an old road used to lead over the hill, due west to north Central or what is also known as the Middle Road. There is one cellar hole just across this road, (west side). I didn't have time to go beyond that but will go back when the Middle Road is drier. To go back to the East as you leave the R&G Road and go west you follow a double stone wall for quite some distance and come to a rather steep incline which leads just south off the R&G Club pond. There is one cellar hole not far from there.

There are two

beyond that. For the most part the land lays quite good for farming and to judge by the foundations there must have been good sized farms for early days. From the top of the hill the land slopes gently to the west. The old road seems to have been built better than on the west side than on the east and a much better grade. I should judge the travel would have been west as Charlemont would be the nearest railroad and town of any size. Some 10 miles distant. I have trouble typing this and listening to a ball game and have made more errors than both teams did. The Middle Road was not built until after this old road was abandoned.

5 - 22 - 71

I went down the old road east of Dukstras to an old cellar hole and turned left on what had been a road at one time, went about 1/2 mile I should judge and came to another cellar hole. I looked around quite a bit and there didn't appear to have been much cultivated land as the house had been built in a high spot of about 1-1/2 acres. The rest of the land seemed to be on the wet side. There had been quite a number of apple trees there at one time and still are several live ones, also some that I judged to be seedlings from the old trees. There was a well about a rod from the cellar but I couldn't find any positive sign of a barn.

5 - 24 - 71

#2 I started looking for the old road rather late that was supposed to go from Central St. over to McCary's. I crossed back and forth on the narrow strip at the town line but didn't find anything that indicated that there had been one. I did find

two cellar holes, one was not too large, but good square one, not very large one the other an L shaped one that appeared to have had a large chimney foundation but not much storage room. There were several badly rusted cans around. I also found an old sugar arch, built for a kettel but with some old brick around. It was getting late so I didn't investigate the arch as close as I would have and it isn't too far from the Cumm. Rd. so I think I will go back sometime. There is quite a lot of good sized timber down through tere. I intend to go in from the other way (west) sometime and hope it won't be as steep.

NOTES ON OLD ROADS

No. (1) Beals Hill Road discontinued from a line even with the north side of Fisk's house.

No. (2) Old road west of South St. and east of Central (Cum. Rd.) Used to cross South St. near Mrs. McCarry's house. This was discontinued 1808, than vote was rescinded so it is still a town road. Is not access to any property now.

No. (3) Road west from Grant St. near Ashfield Rod & Gun discontinued to a bridal path in 1832. Access to state land. Access from other roads, should be discontinued.

No. (4) On Union St., part way up Willcutt's Hill is an old town way which leads to the Willcutt Lot, so-called. It is access to that lot and could not well be discontinued. The matter was discussed and "tabled" in town meeting in 1794.

No. (5) Near Luce's bridge on Main St., a stub is still town rd. to a point 5 rods east of the southeast corner of Cullen's land. This gives access to no ones land so should be discontinued Also the east end of same road from North Central St. to site of

Sam Noye's house.

No. (6) Old road east from Grant St. to site of Benj. Gloyd Sr. house land now owned by Flahive who has access from Grant St. should be discontinued.

The end of Tom's notes. End.

South of Main St., opposite No.5 at one time there was a road that ran south and ended near (Beals) house.

There was one just south of the road recently built (parallel)

Also there was one just north of where the bridge was on West Hill that went north of the brook and crossed the former W. Cummington Rd. and came onto Main St. where the new road begins.

There is an old road that starts at Shepard's and goes past McMahans to Central St. This one is discontinued below McMahans.

Some distance (1/4 mile) below McMahans is one at the right that at one time came to Central St. below Thatcher's.

PAGE 2 OBITUARY

Howard Nelson hathaway, 90, of Worthington, died January 27th, after a brief illness, in Sacramento, California, where he was spending the winter with his daughter.

He was born in Windsor, September 16, 1890, the only son of Frank and Emma (Mattis) Hathaway. The family moved to Plainfield when Howard was 10 years old. In 1912 he married Helen Horr and they had 7 children, only 3 of whom survive him. His wife died in 1937. He lived in Plainfield most of his life, first in the Seelye house at the top of "Hathaway Hill" on West Hill Road. He later bought the farm where the Panzeris live and built that house. When his family was grown he moved "over town" and built the 2 houses at the Skaling place. He lived there until 6 or 7 years ago, when he sold to the Skalings and went to live with his son, Frank, in Worthington.

Howard farmed, logged, built houses, worked in the manganese mine, built walls, built roads, and built history in this little town. The 1970 Annual Town Report was dedicated to him. He gave much of his time and energy to Plainfield. He served as an Assessor for nearly 30 years, was Highway Superintendant for a number of years, also served as Selectman, member of the Planning Board, Library Trustee, Tree Warden, and in various other capacities. His stone work, which includes the library steps, is a lasting memorial. He was a raconteur of note and his dry humor provided many a chuckle. In his later years he passed the time by writing his memoirs. A copy of this fascinating document is available at the library.

Howard is survived by a daughter, Eunice Hardwick of Sacramento, California; two sons, Frank of Worthington and Norton of Plainfield, 9 grandchildren and 8 greatgrandchildren. A graveside service will be held in the spring in Hilltop Cemetery at the convenience of the family. Contributions may be given in his memory to Shaw Memorial Library.

ARH& ALD

Plainfield Post, date?