

THE WESTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY BULLETIN



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Weston Center viewed from the northeast in the 1880's. These are the buildings which Weston soldiers saw upon returning from the Civil War in 1865 — see story below. The church is the third building of the First Parish Church and stood on this site from 1840-1887, when the present stone church was begun. The Josiah Smith Tavern, built in 1757, still stands. Notice that the porch then extended the full length of the house. Until the Town Hall was built, several Town Meetings were held in the second floor ballroom of the Tavern. To the right are the horse sheds and Town Hall (1847-1917). From 1857 to 1900, the Town Hall housed the Public Library. From 1854 to 1878 Weston's first high school was held on the lower floor of the Town Hall in the northeast corner room visible on the right. On the far right is Colonel Daniel S. Lamson's tailor shop — see March 1977 *Bulletin*. The tailor shop has been moved and today serves as an insurance office, the west wing of 483 Boston Post Road. The area which we call the "Town Green" was then a bog which served as part of Colonel Lamson's cow pasture. In the foreground is the east end of "Forest Street", now Conant Road. The four-foot stone post in the extreme left foreground still stands on the lawn of 3 Conant Road. The Boston Post Road was then called "Central Avenue." The triangle formed by the church, Josiah Smith Tavern, and Town Hall was known as the "Town Square."

RETURN OF WESTON'S SOLDIERS

The spring and summer of 1865 were a bittersweet period for most Americans. In April, President Lincoln was assassinated and the Union emerged victorious from four years of bloody Civil War. During the summer, soldiers began to return home — some in caskets, some wounded, but most alive, well, and joyous. "Soldiers receptions are now the order of the day everywhere" observed the *Waltham Sentinel* of July 28, 1865 — as it described recent celebrations in Concord, Lexington, and Waltham. Tuesday, August 22nd, was Weston's turn to experience one of the most emotional events of the Nineteenth Century, as towns and cities in both North and South honored local soldiers returning from the war which determined not only the fate of slavery as a policy, but also the future of the Union and its Constitution. Weston's "Memorial Services and Reception of Returned Soldiers" — as the newspapers headlined the event — is described in this annotated account, blended from descriptions in the two Waltham newspapers:

"The people of Weston united yesterday in honoring the memory of the brave men who have gone from their midst, and who have fallen in the recent struggle, and also in giving those who have returned a reception which should show the hearty appreci-

ation of the gallant services rendered by them in the field. Memorial services were held in the Unitarian Church. They commenced about 1½ o'clock with music furnished by Gilmore's Band, which, during the services played several fine pieces. . . . The church was very appropriately trimmed for the occasion, bearing. . . . the names and places of battle of the deceased soldiers, trimmed in evergreen and black, surmounted with stars, stripes, and mottoes [such as] 'Though a host should encamp against me, my heart shall not fear' and 'Peace be within thy walls and prosperity within thy palaces' The pulpit was draped with the American flag, and in front was a harp trimmed with flowers. The church was crowded. . . . Reverend E. H. Sears reviewed the history of Weston men in the War. He stated that 126 men had gone forth to represent the town of Weston in the Union Army, and that of these, 67 were natives of the town. Most of the men enlisted in the 35th, 43rd, and 45th [Volunteer Infantry] Regiments. Of 17 that went out in the 35th Regiment, but 5 had returned home alive, 10 had been killed in battle and 2 died of disease. [Sears' statistics are puzzling. Twelve deaths of Weston men are recorded, but only five were members of the 35th Regiment. Both newspapers record Sears' statement similarly, thus it is likely that he was the mistaken party. Sears had begun to preach in Weston only three months previous; he did not move to Weston until the following year. Sears was correct that the 35th Regiment — which fought at Antietam in 1862, Fredericksburg in 1862-3, Vicksburg and Jackson in 1863, the Wilderness Campaign in 1864, and Petersburg in 1864 — accounted for the bulk of Weston deaths. All Weston casualties occurred in 1862-4; one in the Navy and one in Andersonville Prison. A survey of the units of ninety-six of the Weston men reveals that twenty-one were members of the 44th Regiment, nineteen of the 35th, seven of the 16th — Colonel Lamson's regiment, six of the 43rd, and five of the 2nd Massachusetts Cavalry.] When the services in the church were concluded a procession, consisting of returned soldiers, invited guests and citizens generally, was formed and preceded by the band, marched to the Town Hall [the 1847 Town Hall was located on the Green near the present watering trough] where a collation had been provided. It was originally intended that this should have been partaken of in Lamson's Grove [an area near the present Town Hall], and the tables prepared but owing to the rain in the morning they were moved to the Hall which was draped with the American flag, and around the walls were the names of the various battles participated in by the returned soldiers. A number of mottoes and sentiments also adorned the walls among which were: 'Heroes mantled in immortal glory,' 'Our flag rules the hour,' and 'All honor to the empty sleeve.' [This motto was among the most popular of the day. 'Honor the empty sleeve. Agreed; but let your gratitude sink a little deeper or go a little farther, let the empty sleeves gather something more substantial than honor — jobs', editorialized the *Waltham Sentinel* on August 8, 1865.] A bountiful collation was partaken of which showed the talents of the women of Weston. . . . The gathering was then called to order by Edwin Hobbs, President of the day, Rev. Mr. Bowen, formerly Chaplain in the 35th, said this was a soldiers' day, that soldiers liked deeds rather than words. He recommended the erection of a monument, on which should be inscribed the names of the fallen. [The Town Meeting of November 7 agreed, in principle, to erect a monument; the Town Meeting in April, 1866 voted instead to expand the Town Hall with a Memorial Hall.] Col. Hudson of the 35th testified to the great service rendered by the ladies at home. Capt. Samuel Patch was received with great cheering. [Patch, a native of Weston, enlisted as a corporal. He appears to have been one of Weston's favorites. Patch was presented with a sword and sash from the citizens of Weston on December 29, 1864 in Petersburg, Virginia. After the Civil War he lived in Waltham, serving as Commander of the F.P.H. Rogers Post, Grand Army of the Republic, in 1905-06.] Mr. Levi Warren of Salem, but a native of Weston. . . . said it was predicted that, after the wars of Cromwell, in England, the return of so many soldiers educated to battle, might demoralize the community. . . . He trusted it would not be verified with us. . . . Alonzo Fiske, selectman of Weston spoke. . . . At the close of the speaking, a motion was made that three rousing cheers be given for the Rev. Mr. Topliff [of Weston, a Baptist] for his valuable services during the War. Upon this the reverend gentleman rose and begged the audience to delay their cheers until he had completed his work

[benediction]; whereupon the motion was made and carried to give him three cheers now, and nine when his work was done . . . An adjournment took place to the square in front of the Hall [near the present watering trough], where the band performed some of their favorite pieces . . . In the evening the company — or at least the younger portion of them — reorganized and engaged in the social dance, accompanied by Gilmore's band, known to be so good that a compliment is not needed . . . Thus ended the exercises of a day which, notwithstanding the unpromising aspect in the morning, was much enjoyed by all."

Donald G. Kennedy



Patrick S. Gilmore, leader of "Gilmore's Brass Band" of Boston, brought his musicians to Weston for a short parade, an afternoon concert, and an evening dance in celebration of the return of Weston's soldiers from the Civil War — on August 22, 1865. Gilmore, a musical P. T. Barnum and the most widely-known American band leader prior to John Philip Sousa, was chosen to lead the massed bands at the 1876 Centennial Exhibition in Philadelphia.

PATRICK GILMORE IN WESTON

In the Broadway musical, *The Music Man*, "Professor Harold Hill" introduces "Seventy-Six Trombones" as he shouts:

"And you'll feel something akin to the electric thrill I once enjoyed, when Gilmore, Liberati, Pat Conway, 'The Great Creator', W. C. Handy, and John Philip Sousa all came to town on the very same historic day!"

Weston may have lacked the latter five, but when her men were honored upon their return from the Civil War — as described in the article above — Weston had as its bandleader for the day, Patrick Sarsfield Gilmore. At the time of his appearance in Weston, Pat Gilmore was already on his way to becoming one of a handful of extraordinarily well-known musical impresarios of the Nineteenth Century. A year prior to his appearance in Weston on August 22, 1865, Gilmore had been asked by General Nathaniel P. Banks — of Waltham, in civilian life — to lead a concert in New Orleans at the inauguration of the Governor of "freed and restored" Louisiana. Gilmore rose to the grandiose occasion/opportunity by assembling 500 instrumentalists and a chorus of 5000 school children. The bandmaster — who liked to please a crowd — shocked some of his audience by including "Dixie's Land" on the program. For the concert's climax, the musicians performed "Hail, Columbia" with Gilmore firing an electrically-triggered cannon on each of the final thirty-six beats! (One must wonder whether Gilmore's bombastic treatment of this piece led to the late Nineteenth Century ex-

pression of "I got 'Hail Columbia' when I got home"!)) A few words must be said on behalf of this musical P. T. Barnum.

We do not know what music Gilmore's Band played in Weston, although surely it included his composition, "When Johnny Comes Marching Home." In Concord, a month previous, his band played dirges and "Yankee Doodle" — the latter a typical Gilmore touch for a community with such pride in its role in the American Revolution. Undoubtedly Gilmore played "Glory, Hallelujah!" — as the "Battle Hymn of the Republic" was then called — because it was he who had popularized the melody with its earlier words, "John Brown's Body." In churches — and probably in Weston — the band often played "Abide with Me," "Nearer My God to Thee," and "Ave Maria" which lend themselves to a brass choir effect. "Columbia, the Gem of the Ocean," "The Star Spangled Banner," "Just Before the Battle, Mother," "The Vacant Chair," and Stephen Foster's "We Are Coming, Father Abraham, 300,000 More" were among the patriotic songs in the repertoire of Gilmore's Band. For dancing the band played popular songs of the day: "Nellie Was A Lady," "Old Dan Tucker," "Oh! Susanna," and various quadrilles, quick steps, and polkas. When the enormous Ned Kendall was traveling with the band, Gilmore's group often played "Wood Up Quickstep," thus permitting "The Paul Bunyan of New England" to demonstrate his virtuosity on the keyed bugle.

After leading bands in Boston, Pat Gilmore became director of the Salem Brass Band, then in 1859 took over the Boston Brigade Band, renaming it "Gilmore's Band." In the fall of 1861 — the initial year of the Civil War — Gilmore and his entire band enlisted in the Massachusetts 24th Volunteer Regiment. By the following summer Gilmore's men were back in Boston, receiving a heroes' welcome each time they played in their faded and frayed blue Army uniforms. Critics maintained that the uniforms were a calculated tactic because they could not have become shabby in such a brief time. Gilmore volunteered to keep up Boston's spirits — for a fee — for the duration of the War, with concerts every Wednesday and Saturday evenings at the Boston Music Hall. In 1863 Governor Andrew asked Gilmore to reorganize the state militia bands. In the course of this opportunity to locate new musicians for his band, Gilmore organized twenty bands. These players were potential customers for the band instruments being manufactured opposite Old South Church by Gilmore, Graves and Company "under strict supervision of P. S. GILMORE, leader of Gilmore's celebrated Band."

Four years after the close of the War, Gilmore had the urge to stage another extravaganza. In 1869 he organized, in Boston, the four-day National Peace Jubilee, an event which was viewed as respectable after Gilmore persuaded Eben Jordan — founder of Jordan Marsh — to act as treasurer. The festival opened with "A Mighty Fortress Is Our God" performed by the musicians and the largest, most powerful organ ever constructed — an organ built by Elias and George Hook, friends of Gilmore from his days of leading the Salem Brass Band, and undoubtedly worked upon by Francis H. Hastings of Weston who had been with the Hooks for fourteen years! President Grant and his Cabinet attended one of the concerts at which 1000 instrumentalists accompanied the 10,000 voice chorus. Helmeted Boston firemen, dressed in red, beat on 100 anvils during the "Anvil Chorus" which was conducted by Gilmore with a six-foot baton. This event was so successful that Gilmore organized, in 1872, an eighteen-day World Peace Jubilee, again in the Back Bay. The coliseum seated 100,000; the instrumentalists numbered 2000. When the 20,000 voice chorus got out of control during one of the concerts, the audience laughed hilariously upon discovering that the composition which the musicians were attempting was Handel's "All We Like Sheep Have Gone Astray."

Donald G. Kennedy

FROM THE EDITOR

Two charter members of the Society, Dorothy Upham Roy and Philip F. Coburn, died recently. We extend our sympathy to their families. Phil, the author of *Growing Up in Weston*, displayed an uncommon delight in describing the events of his boyhood. His description of the Hook and Hastings organ factory on Viles Street will be published in the *Bulletin* in the fall.

ANNIVERSARY DINNER

The Annual Charter Anniversary Dinner of the Weston Historical Society took place Friday evening, the 20th of May, 1983 at the St. Peter's Episcopal Church undercroft. Steve Riley, our president, did it again. This time he invited a most distinguished speaker who is not only a knowledgeable historian but also has a terrific sense of humor.

Max Hall is originally from Georgia, educated at Emory University, and topped his journalistic experiences by the coveted Nieman Fellowship at Harvard. He is by profession a journalist, served for years at the Harvard University Press, and was also advising the faculty of the Harvard Business School on their writings.

All history buffs and Franklin buffs should be aware of his book, *Benjamin Franklin and Polly Baker* (Chapel Hill, N.C.: University of North Carolina Press, 1960; \$15), which is still in print. It is a tour de force on Franklin's most famous hoax.

This, the first program of the Society in its 21st year, was entitled "Benjamin Franklin: Literary Hoaxer." Max Hall concentrated on eight mail hoaxes of Franklin. This is one of those occasions when I wish that our *Bulletin* would be a larger vehicle, where we could reprint the entire presentations of our speakers, since any omissions, I feel, shortchange our readers, especially those who could not be present at the dinner. Alas, because of space limitation, I have to condense.

Franklin started early with his hoaxes. At sixteen, he wrote under the pen-name of a woman, Silence Dogood, in the *New England Courant*, slipping the manuscript under the door of the printer, his brother. Mrs. Dogood satirized scholarly ostentation and the poor teaching at Harvard College. At times she became an early women's libber, yet she also questions the space taken up by the wide hoops of the ladies, who did not pay taxes! Silence Dogood was also a moralist, taking up her pen against drunkenness — evidently a lasting vice with us, considering the current campaign against drunken driving.

The strongest attack against the double standard from Franklin's pen was "The Speech of Polly Baker." Polly was brought to court for the fifth time for producing an illegitimate child. This was against the law, as love children resulting from illegal fornication often became a public burden, a fact displeasing to thrifty old timers. Polly defends herself well: she added to the king's subjects in a country that certainly needed people; she followed the laws of God (rather than the laws of Connecticut) by "increasing and multiplying." Why punish the women? Fine the men for illegal fornication, Polly claimed, and erect statues to the women who strengthen the country. One of the judges was so impressed that he married Polly right after her trial! The hoax about Polly Baker was accepted for a fact and discussed and debated not only in America but also in the learned salons of Paris. Franklin, listening to the heated debates, sat back and enjoyed the success of his hoax tremendously.

Many of his hoaxes were politically motivated. During the American Revolution, Franklin printed on his own press at Passy (while he was our representative to the French court) a true replica of a *Supplement* to the *Boston Independent Chronicle*, in which he reported the gift of thousands of scalps taken by the Indian allies of the British: scalps of children, women, especially pregnant women; all this was to lower the British in the eyes of the world, and particularly in the esteem of the Dutch, whose purse strings at that time John Adams tried to loosen for a loan to the new republic. "The Edict by the King of Prussia" seemingly was aimed at the Prussian people, yet quite evidently was aimed at British colonial policies. It is a mighty attack against the mother country at the time when the American revolt against her was just brewing, in 1773.

Many of Franklin's sayings in the *Poor Richard Almanacs* are funny and witty, and many survived to our days. The number of his hoaxes is countless. Hoaxes pop up periodically, like the falsified autobiography of Howard Hughes of recent memory, or Hitler's faked diaries a few weeks ago. But few of them will have the staying power of some of Franklin's jokes, perpetrated partly for his own or for his friends' amusements. They are classics and are part of our national heritage.

Dr. Vera Laska



No photographs of the Weston Cornet Band are known to survive. Yet — in style of uniforms and types of instruments — the band looked much like this one. The three men on the right are holding cornets. A clarinet is next, followed by two alto horns, a valve trombone, two larger alto horns, and two styles of tubas. All four of the alto horns point skyward when being played.

“ANY MEMBER WHO GETS INTOXICATED WHILE. . .”

The first band to march in Weston on Memorial Day was the Weston Cornet Band, organized at the old Town Hall on February 6, 1876. The twenty-five charter members signed a paper pledging “. . . to attend all Band Meetings, whether for practice or business, regularly and promptly . . . to be responsible for our several instruments, and, in short, to do our best to make our Band a success, and a credit to ourselves, and to our town.” The group marched on “Decoration Day” — as the holiday was then called — for five consecutive years, beginning in 1876.

Although the Band was smaller by 1879, during the initial three years about twenty-six men marched on Decoration Day. Theodore Jones played bass drum, Albert Coburn bought his own personal pair of cymbals, William H. Coburn played cornet, and Henry Hall played side drum. Often there was a “relief drummer”. The only woodwinds were a piccolo and two clarinets. The brasses included nine Eb and Bb cornets. A cornet is stubbier than a trumpet and produces a slightly more mellow sound — trumpets later became popular because of the piercing sounds sought in dance bands. The Weston Cornet Band also had seven alto and tenor horns, a baritone horn, and two Eb basses. Familiar Weston names — Richardson, Cutting, Kenney, Smith, Upham, Heard, Ellis, Williams — appear among the thirty-seven who at some time played in the group. No photographs of the Weston Cornet Band are known to exist, but bands of that era presented a strange sight. Some players would have had “modern” instruments with the bells facing frontward, but it is likely that others used the older, practical Civil War-style instruments which faced backward over the player’s shoulder toward the marching soldiers. It was not unusual in such a group for one or two men to have old cavalry instruments with the bells pointing skyward. Thus as the group marched, music blared in all directions.

Charles Hemenways’ handwritten piccolo parts to some of the band’s music survive. We know that the band played “Marching Thro’ Georgia”, “Glory Hallelujah” — as the “Battle Hymn of the Republic” was popularly known — “Sultan’s Polka”, “Webster’s Funeral March”, and two pieces written by leader Joseph S. B. Knox, “Ours” galop and the “W.C.B. (Weston Cornet Band) March”. Undoubtedly the group played other popular marching songs, the words to which would have been known by heart to the spectators — “Battle Cry of Freedom” (“Yes, We’ll Rally ’Round the Flag, Boys”), “When Johnny Comes Marching Home”, and “Tramp! Tramp! Tramp!”. Written records of the band indicate that at least two different published books of music were purchased, although their titles are not known. One popular music book of the era, “Brass Band Journal” has recently been recorded by the Empire Brass

Quintet. The instrumental balance of the Weston Cornet Band would have sounded — on a less professional level — somewhat like this recording.

The secretary's record of the Band — a portion of which appears below — offers a glimpse of the church, political, and social life of the Town as well as an understanding of what was considered proper behavior a century ago. Punctuation and capitalization of the original manuscript have been retained.

"April 27, 1876 . . . Voted that hereafter no person not a member of the Band shall be admitted to the Band room during practice hours except that he or she be passed in by a member of the Band and said member shall be responsible for his or her behavior [no names of women appear in the secretary's record] . . . Voted to return to practice. . .

May 19, 1876 . . . Mr. [Edward] Coburn in behalf of the town invited the band to participate in decorating the soldiers's graves, on Tuesday, p.m., May 30, 1876. Voted accept the invitation. Voted to meet on Monday, Wednesday and Friday evenings of following week for practice.

May 26, 1876 . . . Voted that a committee of three be chosen to confer with Mr. Edward Coburn in regard to the arrangements on Decoration Day. Voted the committee be instructed to arrange a program for the occasion in case none had been already arranged. Voted that the thanks of the Band is rendered to Mr. S.H.M. Heard for keeping the door this evening. Voted that Mr. H.P. [Horace] Heard be directed to inform Mr. Heard of the action of the Band. Voted that the services of Caldwell's Drum Corps be accepted with gratitude on Decoration Day.

May 29, 1876 . . . Voted to meet at the house of Mr. Daniel Smith [on School Street] at one o'clock on May 30 and march in a body to the Town-hall. [The Band did not purchase caps until June nor uniforms until 1877, thus probably wore old military uniforms for engagements in 1876. If a uniform had originally belonged to its current wearer, it should have fit well. If it had not, then . . .]

June 7, 1876 . . . Voted to extend a vote of thanks to Captain Samuel Patch for the efficient manner in which he conducted the excercises on Decoration Day, and for his kindness and courtesy to the Band on that occasion.

June 14, 1876 . . . Voted to accept the invitation of the Chairman of Selectmen of Weston, to participate in the celebration of July 4, 1876. Voted to accept the invitation of the Baptist Society to attend the Straw-berry Festival in their vestry this evening.

June 19, 1876 . . . [By-Laws] Article VI. Any member may be expelled, who persistently refuses to obey the directions of the leader . . . or who is found incompetent to play the parts assigned him, by majority vote of the members present . . . but said member shall have an opportunity to be heard, after which he shall retire to await the action of the Band. Article VII. Any member who persists in playing discordantly . . . shall be reported to the leader whereupon, said name shall come before the Band for action.

June 30, 1876 . . . Voted to buy caps for the Band.

July 31, 1876 . . . Voted to go to the Baptist picnic in one team.

August 2, 1876 . . . The Band attended the Unitarian picnic at Lily Point Grove [on the Charles River not far from the present site of WCRB], Waltham (fine day).

August 7, 1876 . . . The Band attended the Baptist Picnic at Lily Point Grove, Waltham, Mass. Fine day but hotter than Tophet ["hotter than Hell"].

September 7, 1876 . . . The sense of the meeting was taken as to the price of playing, and all were willing to play for \$2.50 per day. The majority of the Band were willing to play for less than the above sum in case that could not be obtained.

September 11, 1876 . . . Voted to [purchase dark blue] coats trimmed with red cord and gold lace, three rows of gilt buttons on the front, and six buttons on the tail.

Voted to adopt white belt. Voted to have [dark blue] pants trimmed with red cord on outside of leg. . . Mr. George R. Caldwell reported that he had offered the services of the Band to the Waltham Post G.A.R. for \$40.00 and expenses, and that he would furnish relief drummers and in case the Band were dissatisfied with the terms, he would make up the other \$10.00 from his own pocket.

September 18, 1876 . . . Voted to appoint Mr. Charles Ellis a committee of one to explain to the Grand Army Post of Waltham the reasons why the Band, bid so low [\$40.00] to play for their parade next month and to state that the Band will not go for less than \$50.00.

October 4, 1876 . . . The Band attended a party at Genl. C.J. Paine's and gave a concert, after which Genl. P. provided a supper. ["Genl. P." of Highland Street in Weston, Nahant, and Boston was the father of Olympic athletes John and Sumner Paine described in the January, 1983 *Bulletin*].

October 12, 1876 . . . Voted to accept the invitation of the Methodist Society of Weston to attend their Fair in the M.E. Church on Wednesday evening, November 1, 1876. Voted to purchase a cornet of Mr. Geo. Caldwell and present it to our leader.

October 19, 1876 . . . Voted to play at the political in the Town Hall for \$10.00.

November 13, 1876 . . . A meeting of the Band was called to order by the leader, who remarked that it had become apparent that one drummer was enough for the Band, and that both drummers wished the Band to choose as soon as possible between them. Voted to ballot for the one which the Band desired to remain. A ballot was taken, the result of which was the choice of Henry J. Hall by a unanimous vote — 18 ballots being cast. Voted to fix the price of the Band for a day job at fifty dollars and for a night job twenty-five dollars.

November 24, 1876 . . . Voted that the cash received from the Republicans be put in the Treasury.

February 5, 1877 . . . Voted to distribute coats and belts.

February 12, 1877 . . . Voted to have a concert and ball, Thursday evening, February 22. Voted to assess all members who did not take a ticket to dance fifty cents. Voted to exempt members who belong to quadrille band from the assessment. Voted that the admittance to concert be twenty-five cents and dance fifty cents extra.

February 19, 1877 . . . Voted that all members of the Band should wear their coats buttoned to the chin while playing February 22.

February 26, 1877 . . . Voted to go to Sudbury with the "Avon Dramatic Club" of Wayland provided, conveyances were furnished. Voted to choose a committee of two to purchase epauletts such to be same as sample shown previous, one pair to be gold lace. Voted that any member who gets intoxicated while the Band has an engagement or while in uniform shall be expelled [That must have been an exciting Washington's Birthday Dance!]. Voted that committee on epauletts be authorized to purchase articles necessary to fasten epauletts to coat. Voted to extend thanks to "Weston Quadrille Band" [probably an ad hoc group from within the Weston Cornet Band] for services February 22.

March 5, 1877 . . . Voted to take epauletts same as sample shown, provided the blue matches the coat.

March 12, 1877 . . . Voted to reconsider motion whereby it was voted to wear epauletts to Sudbury.

March 19, 1877 . . . Voted to invite a tailor to come to next meeting to fit epauletts to coats. Voted to reconsider. Voted that the Treasurer be authorized to distribute epauletts at next meeting.

April 2, 1877 . . . Voted to accept Geo. P. Caldwell's resignation [apparently forced for non-attendance]. Voted that the Secretary be authorized to consult a lawyer. Mr. Caldwell refuses to return Band property [his uniform]. Mr. Edward Jennings' name brought before band for discordant playing [Jennings, of Glen Road, was a cornet player who was a charter member of the Band]. Voted that the Leader be empowered to speak to the poor players. Voted that Mr. Jennings be placed on trial for one month, that he be allowed to play at rehearsals but not in case of any engagement of Band.

April 16, 1877 . . . Voted to allow the matter regarding Mr. Caldwell's uniform to lie on table for two weeks.

April 30, 1877 . . . The examining Committee reported favorably on Mr. E. Jennings' name and he was reinstated. Voted that the Sec. be a committee of one to confer with the selectmen of Weston in regard to playing May 30 . . . the vote to compel every member to remain in the hall while the Band was practicing was lost.

May 2, 1877 . . . Voted to take the job at Watertown [Post 81 G.A.R.] and authorize the Secretary to write the Commander of the Post that the Band would furnish twenty-five pieces including one relief drummer for sixty dollars and a noontime collection. Voted to purchase a dozen torches and necessary wicks.

May 21, 1877 . . . Voted that Charles Hemenway and C.H.W. Ellis be a committee to hire two clarinet players for May 30.

June 18, 1877 . . . Voted to accept Mr. & Mrs. Edward Coburn's invitation to give a concert at their residence [on Church Street] on Thursday evening, June 21. Voted to furnish music for Mr. Merriam's "Barn Party" [on Concord Road] for twenty-five dollars.

July 2, 1877 . . . Voted to give a vote of thanks to the Selectmen for their kindness in giving the [Town] Hall free for balance of year.

September 24, 1877 . . . Voted to give a promenade concert and ball.

October 15, 1877 . . . An invitation to furnish music for the Methodist fair was read by the President. Voted to accept the invitation.

March 21, 1878 . . . Voted that the Janitor be instructed to stop card playing in the Hall during Band rehearsals.

March 28, 1878 . . . Voted, to accept the invitation to play at the dedication of the new School House, Saturday, April 6, 1878. Voted, that a committee of one be appointed to see the Fathers of the Town in regard to Decoration Day.

April 18, 1878 . . . Voted that the Band accept the offer of the selectmen to play in town, Decoration Day. Voted, that the musical committee make out a program of pieces to practice for that day.

May 9, 1878 . . . Voted that the Secretary send to Mr. Milton Stone a note in regard to the reason why he did not practice with us in our rehearsals for Decoration Day.

August 17, 1878 . . . Eight members of the Band attended the Picnic of the Waltham Baptist Sunday School at Lily Point Grove.

October 18, 1878 . . . Voted, that the Band play at a Rally in Weston for the sum of ten dollars.

October 19, 1878 . . . Nine members of the Band attended the meeting of the Waltham Riding Club at Central Park, Waltham.

November 21, 1878 . . . The Band attended the reception given Mr. Alonzo S. Fiske at his residence [on North Avenue] in Weston, in honor of his election to represent the town in the next Legislature.

February 24, 1879 . . . Voted: that HP. Heard, H. Skelton, and E.P. Upham be voted out of the Band for non-attendance. [The Band was shrinking in size.] Voted that Mr. T. Jones be authorized to keep the Band Lanterns and torches. Voted that Mr. T. Jones be authorized to hold the box of toys until he could dispose of them to advantage.

April 9, 1879 . . . It was stated that the Band had been asked to play in town Decoration Day . . . It was thought best to get some new music and try to play that day . . . The Band played in Weston Decoration Day for which they received forty dollars. The Band played at a Weston Party at Lily Point Grove August 1, 1879.

September 21, 1879 . . . The Band serenaded Mr. Benjamin Cutter at his house [on South Avenue] in Weston and were entertained in a fine manner by him.

May 13, 1880 . . . The Band held a meeting . . . to see what could be done in regard to Decoration Day, and after playing a few pieces . . . adjourned for one week.

May 22, 1880 . . . The Band held a meeting in the town hall and decided to play Decoration Day May 29 [!] in the afternoon for the sum of twenty-five dollars.

June 17, 1880 . . . It was voted at that meeting to divide the balance of the treasury making a dividend of thirty-seven cents and adjourned the meeting to an indefinite time."

The notes of the secretary end at this point — and membership in the Band had shrunk to thirteen. During 1876, the Band met on forty-five occasions for practice or performance. This number dwindled over the next four years to 27, 19, 6, and 5, respectively. It appears from the notes that there were many opportunities to perform, but that members were not able to devote sufficient time to the Band. The dates of some rehearsals — January 1, July 3, December 26, December 31, dates on which we would be unlikely to hold meetings — are interesting clues regarding the social life of Weston a century ago. Thus, the Weston Cornet Band seems to have disappeared as a year-around activity by 1880. Yet the *Town Report* lists the Band as having performed on Memorial Day in 1885! Further, the *Town Reports* of 1886 and 1887 indicate that the largest sums spent on Memorial Day — \$43 and \$19, respectively — were paid to "Henry Jennison". Mr. Jennison, a tuba player from Central Avenue — now the Boston Post Road — was a charter member of the Band and its Treasurer. It is likely that through 1887 an ad hoc group of players continued to gather for the sole occasion of Memorial Day.

Donald G. Kennedy

A MYSTERY SOLVED . . . AND AN ACCIDENT

The May 1982 *Bulletin* contained an article on the family of James B. Case. The story described the Cases' summering in Weston from 1863 onward, and the building of "Rocklawn" — now known as the "Case House" — at 89 Wellesley Street in 1889, all of which is well-documented. We know also that the 1889 house rests on the site of the Cases' previous summer home which burned. According to a 1960 letter from Emma Ripley — Weston native, teacher, and historian — quoted in our story: "... one night in April 1876 before the family had come from Boston (for the summer) the beautiful Caleb Brooks-General Derby house (then owned by the Cases) burned to the ground." Therein lay a mystery. "Where did the Case family spend the next 13 summers, prior to the construction of the current 'Case House'?" we asked. Perhaps the fire was small, we speculated. A check of newspapers failed to reveal an account of such a fire in 1876.

At last we are a bit closer to the truth. In researching an entirely different topic, we came across the following entry in the *Waltham Free Press*:

"September 9, 1882: The house of James B. Case, about a mile from the center of Weston, was destroyed on Tuesday night . . . loss about \$20,000 . . . the house had

been unoccupied and a hot fire was started in the furnace to dry the house. The Waltham Steamer did good service saving the barn. The Weston Dep't., consisting of two old fire hooks — was prompt on the spot."

Now the story begins to fit together: the principal fire was in the fall of 1882. Whether there was an additional fire in the spring of 1876, as Miss Ripley's letter states, is doubtful given its absence from the newspapers — which reported even the brush fires of that time. Given the later date of the fire — 1882, not 1876 as Miss Ripley believed — and subsequent events in the Case family, it is not surprising that the present "Case House" was not built until 1889.

The loss of their summer home was bad enough, but it led to an even more serious tragedy in the Case family: the death of twenty-five year old Mabel, the Cases' second-oldest daughter. With no summer home for 1883, the Cases engaged for the summer a large "cottage" in fashionable Bar Harbor, Maine. At the end of July, Mabel was involved in an accident at Northeast Harbor on an outing with her father, three sisters, and three friends. We are indebted to the Bar Harbor Historical Society for this article from the *Mount Desert Herald* of August 2, 1883:

"THE ACCIDENT AT NORTHEAST HARBOR

Thursday afternoon a party of eight persons, guests at The Rodick, consisting of Mr. J. B. Case and daughters, of Boston; Miss K. C. Pierce, daughter of Mr. N. W. Pierce, of Boston; Miss White, daughter of Francis White of Baltimore; and Miss Lilly M. Lewis, daughter of Mrs. F. E. Lewis, of Boston, left Bar Harbor in Wm. S. Eaton, Jr.'s yacht Nirvana, of Boston, and were landed at Northeast Harbor. They were there met by a buckboard from George Hardy's stable, Bar Harbor, and started on their return at 6:30 p.m.

When on the brow of the hill, opposite the new cottage now building for President Eliot [of Harvard] at Northeast Harbor, the rocker-pin of the buckboard broke, letting the body of the vehicle slide forward over one of the wheels, frightening the horses and throwing the whole party into a rough, rocky ditch; the horses running away with the pole and whiffletree.

The injured persons were at once taken to the cottage of President Eliot, where they were attended by Dr. Morris Longstreth, of Philadelphia, a summer resident at Bar Harbor and Dr. R. L. Grindle, of Somesville. Miss Mabel Case died of her injuries at about 11 p.m. ten minutes before her mother arrived from Bar Harbor. Mr. Case had a thumb and elbow badly bruised. Carrie Case [age 27, later "Caroline Case Freeman"] was severely injured in knee; the other two Misses Case [Louisa, age 20 and Marian, age 18], received scalp wounds, not serious; Miss White had an arm dislocated, wrist broken and was otherwise badly injured; Miss Lewis suffered a scalp wound and injury to knee; Miss Pierce escaped unhurt. The driver, Mr. Seward Dorr, was badly hurt in the stomach and hips, but will recover. Miss Pierce and the driver were brought back to Bar Harbor the same evening. The others remaining at Northeast Harbor until Friday afternoon, when they were brought to Bar Harbor in the steamer Electa, chartered by Mr. White for a special trip. On their arrival, three of the ladies, Miss Carrie Case, Miss White and Miss Lewis were taken to their home on stretchers.

No blame is attached to Mr. Dorr, who is a skillful and careful driver.

Mr. Francis White and family are occupying the Wallace cottage, for the season; Miss Lewis, with her mother, are at the Walls cottage; the Case family at the J. W. Manchester cottage, all on Cottage street, and Miss Pierce at The Rodick.

The body of Miss Mabel Case was taken to Southwest Harbor, yesterday, to be sent from there by steamer. It will be taken to Boston for burial."

We do not know what the Cases did for the next five summers, but by 1889 they were back in Weston in their new summer home. Our stories of the Case family evoked many memories. Marian Upham Atkinson of Stoughton — who grew up at 102 Ash Street at the turn of the century — wrote to Natalie and Phil Coburn:

"I smiled when I read that coasting was not encouraged. I found a dandy coasting slide (on Case property) just over the wall from School Street. There I went all by

myself. What fun! I either was not caught or was tolerated. Miss Louise and her mother often drove over Ash Street because there were few homes and very little traffic, but the new reservoir was an attraction. One day I went down to the swampy area in back of our house and helped [my sister] Frances gather a bouquet of cow lilies. Back home she awaited the Case carriage and presented her flowers to Miss Louise. Her friendly smile and thank you would gladden any little girl's heart. [Miss Case was shy and would smile and nod, but seldom spoke.] All the history of Miss Marian's Hillcrest was highly interesting to me. Many who smiled a little at the program did not know of its real significance. [I met Marian sometimes] on the sidewalk but more often on the side of School Street as she pedaled along on her tricycle. She looked like a person very satisfied with her mode of travel . . . There was one more lovely lady in that fine family, Mrs. Freeman. When she suffered her great sorrow in the loss of their daughter Rosamond [in 1904] this mother gathered up her little girl's books and bicycle and brought all down to me. I was very young, but I will always remember her graciousness."

The Case stories appear to be endless, from the numerous pieces in the *Waltham Free Press* . . . of November 20, 1891 "A public hearing [is scheduled] on location of poles to residence of Mr. Case" . . . of December 1, 1891 "The telephone line to Mr. Case's will probably run across lots and not by way of the road" . . . of May 3, 1913 "Miss Louise Case is recovering from an operation for appendicitis" . . . or June 6, 1913 "Mrs. James B. Case sailed on the *Kaiser Wilhelm II* last week, Tuesday, from New York" to the following recollection of Mary Williams Chandler: Marian Case, hard-of-hearing in her old age, would walk to a front pew in the First Parish Church — often after the service had been in progress for several minutes — then hoist her cane to the Reverend Miles Hanson, who well could be in mid-prayer, saying "Good morning, Miles!"

Donald G. Kennedy



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All checks should be mailed to: Weston Historical Society, Inc., Box 343, Weston, MA 02193. Additional copies of THE BULLETIN may be obtained by phoning Mrs. Raymond Paynter, Jr., 899-3533, or Donald G. Kennedy, Editor, 893-1319; also by calling at the Josiah Smith Tavern any Wednesday afternoon during "Open House". If you have a spare copy of BULLETINS, vintage 1963-70, our Curator, Mrs. J. E. Fraser, 894-2872 would be glad to have them.