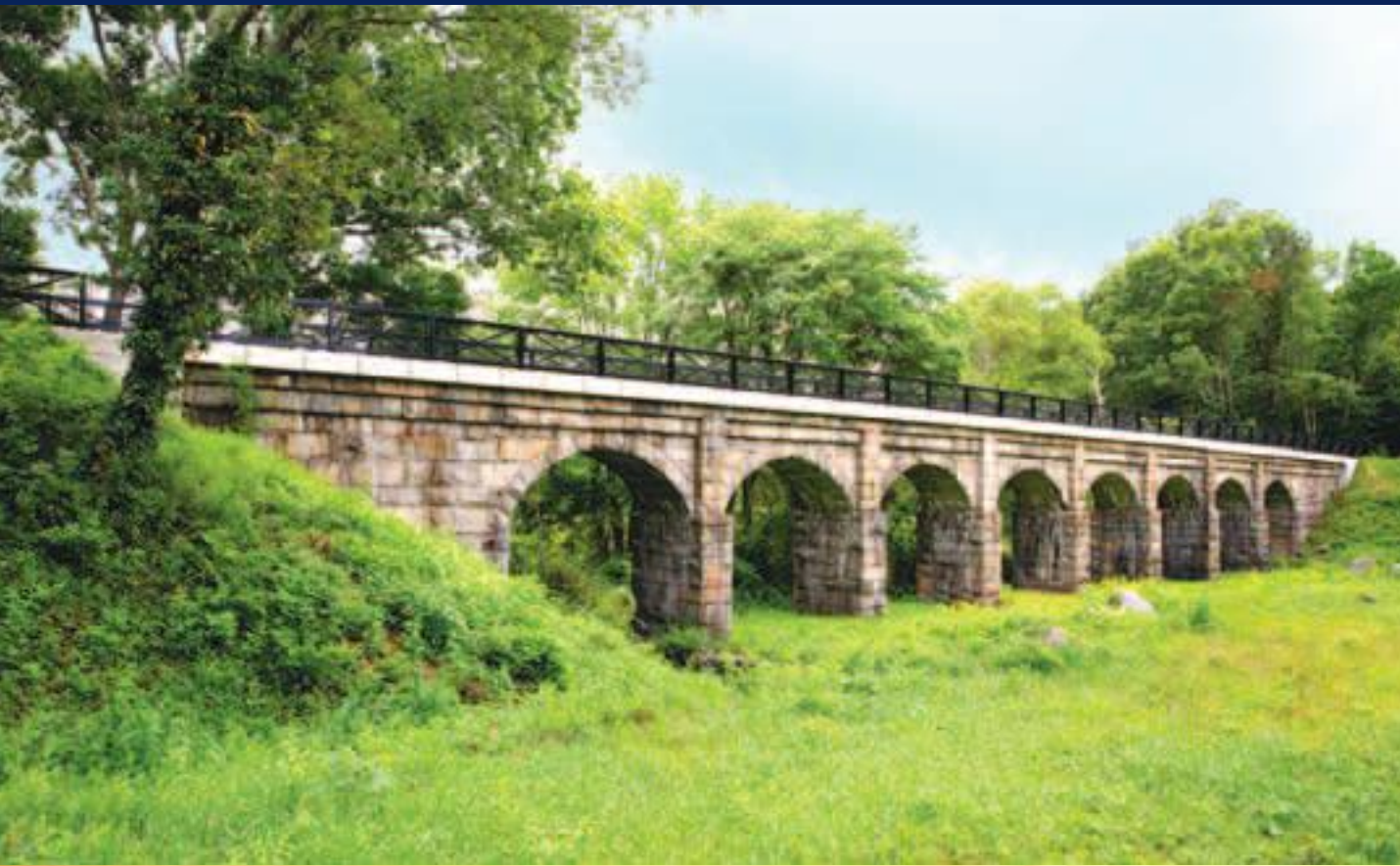
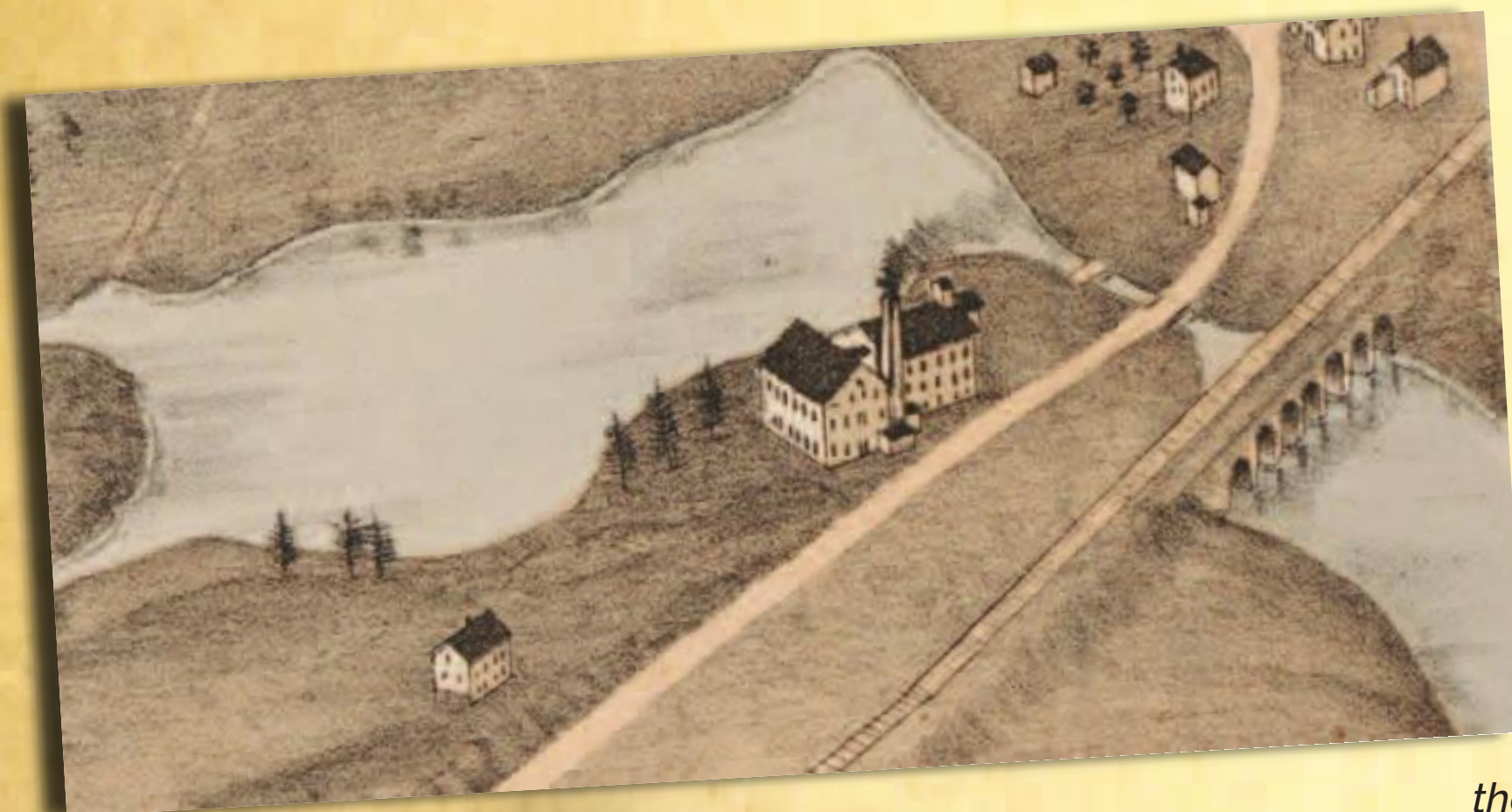


Upper Charles Rail Trail 8-Arch Bridge



The renovated bridge with railings opened to Rail Trail users in 2018. (Photo: The Henry Studio, Holliston)

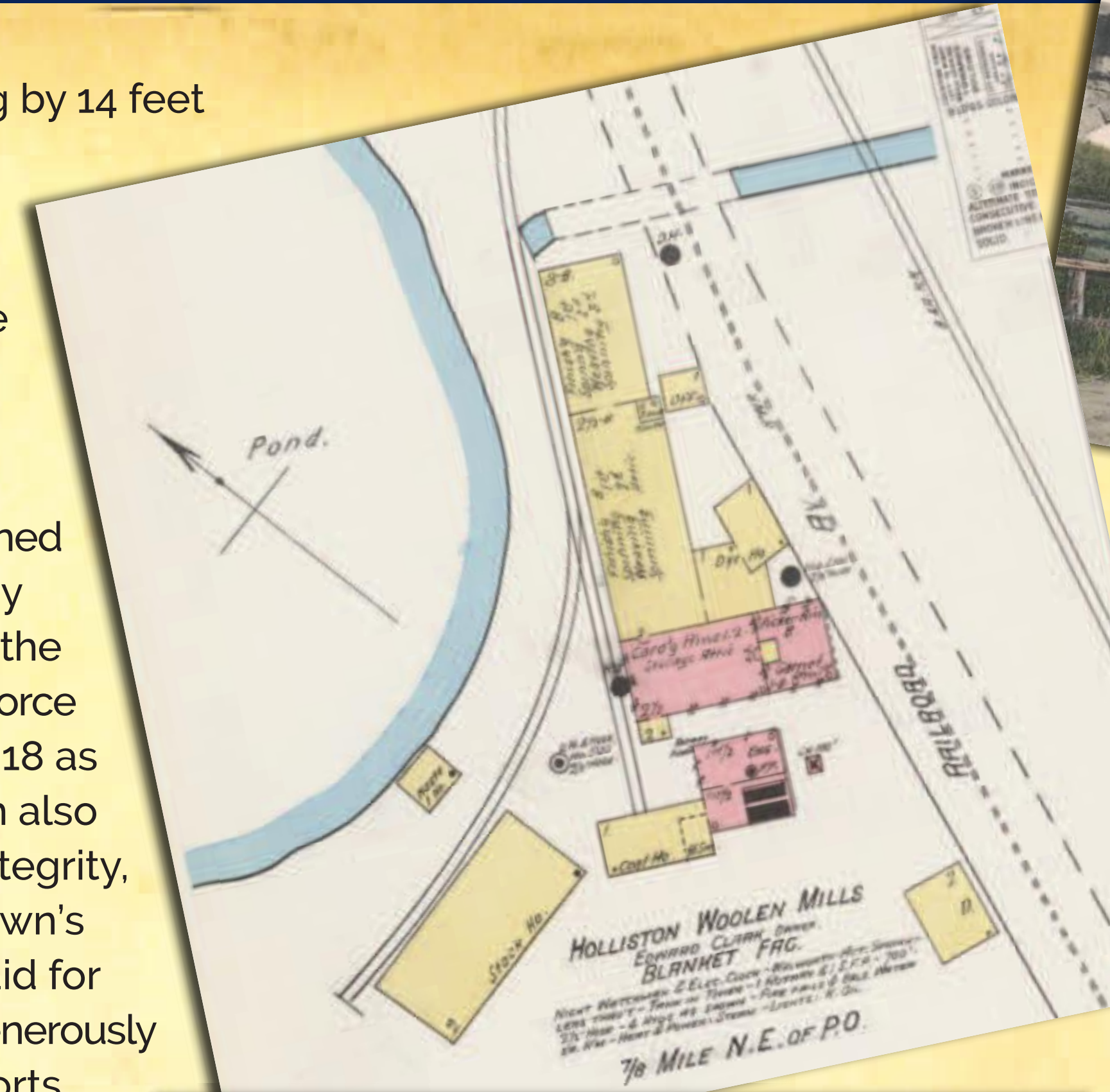


This view of Mill Pond (also known as Factory Pond), with the mill, train tracks, and 8-Arch Bridge (depicted as seven arches) is from an 1878 hand-drawn map. Bogastow Brook crossed under the road and entered the pond at the far left. To provide waterpower to the factory, the water was redirected and a dam built on the right.

Ahead is the Bogastow Brook Viaduct. Bogastow was the name of the area that included both Sherborn and Holliston before 1724. In the large historic photo you can see open fields which later became cranberry bogs and today are woods and wetlands.

The viaduct is an 8-arch bridge of granite and rubble-fill that was built by Irish and Italian immigrants for the Boston & Worcester

Railroad in 1847. It is 260 feet long by 14 feet wide and held a single track. The Holliston rail was constructed with 2,300 ties per mile. The ends of the wooden rail ties were visible along the top edge of the bridge during the 19th and early 20th centuries. As trains got wider and heavier, engineers became concerned about safety. In 1923, the company installed a concrete coping along the top of the bridge to widen and reinforce it. That coping was replaced in 2018 as part of the Rail Trail project, which also included restoration, structural integrity, and safety enhancements. The town's Community Preservation Fund paid for construction, and private donors generously supplied funding for the early efforts and the study of the structural integrity.



Perhaps the most photographed, the Darling Woolen Mill, as seen in this postcard, was just one of several different mills located here over the years. The diagram (above) is from the Sanborn Fire Insurance maps of 1891, which shows the layout of buildings and locations of different business activities of concern to insurers.

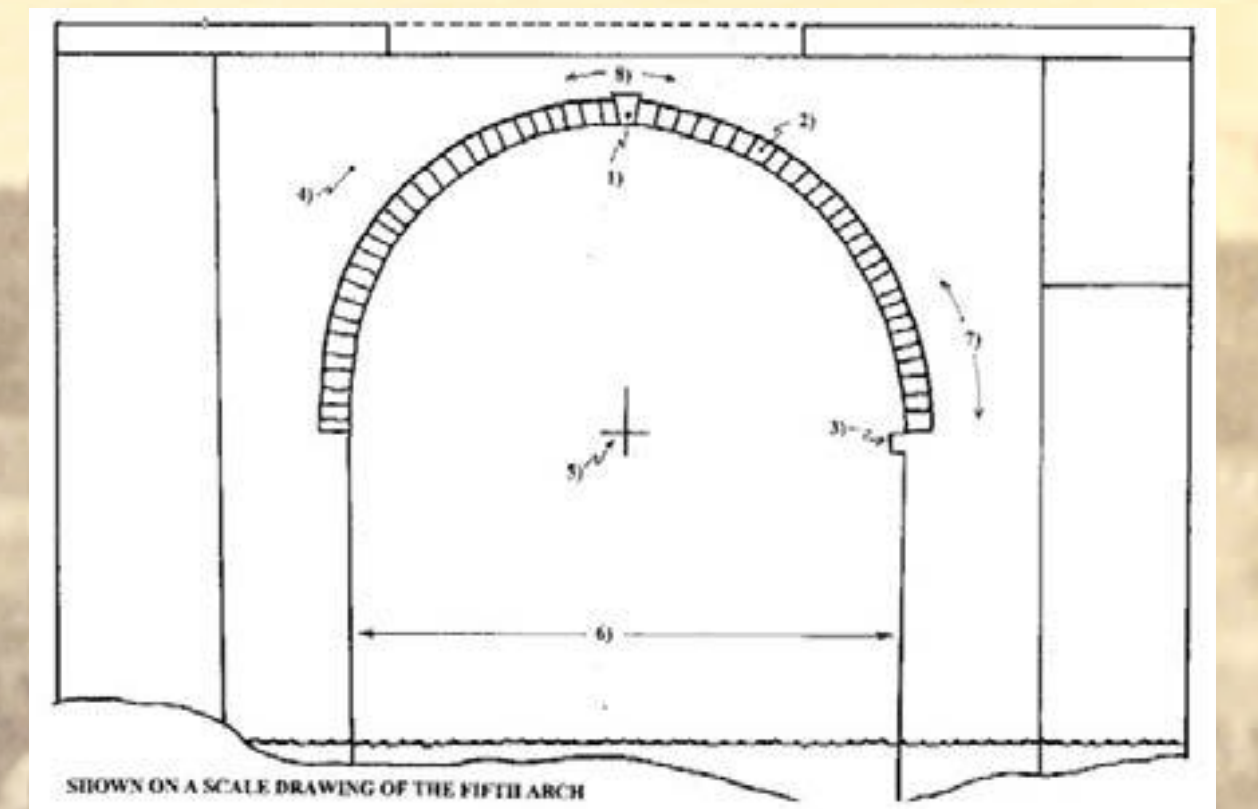


These are keystone arches—held together by gravity, not by mortar. They became obsolete after 1940 when steel was invented.

Style of construction

Historically, arch stones were split and chiseled to fit closely and be strong without the use of mortar. After all the stones were in place, any open joints were grouted with mortar, not for structural value but to prevent water and vegetation from doing damage.

The main components of each arch are two abutments and a keystone. The abutment stones are the cornerstones at the bottom of each arch on either side and bear the weight and downward pressure. The keystone is the top center stone and is the last to be placed when building the arch. "The arch never sleeps" is an old saying meaning it is always under pressure to flatten out.



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Pink granite from Milford/Holliston was prized and typically cut for use as a thin veneer, not as a structure. The bridge was meant to be a showpiece of the granite. The area that the bridge spans did not require an elaborate structure for trains to cross it; the railroad company encountered many more challenging situations. Reports suggest that they liked the idea of allowing their stoneworkers to "show off" and build the 8-Arch Bridge.



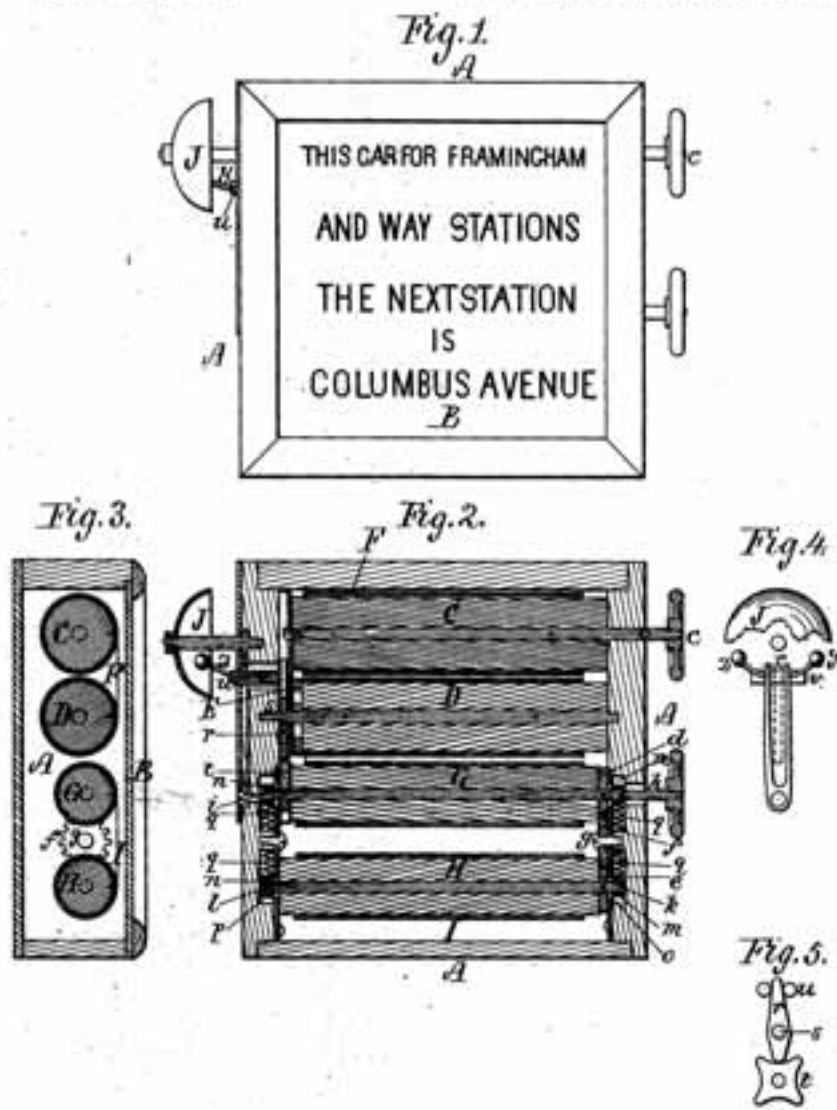
Upper Charles Rail Trail Elm Street

Trains and Economic Development

January 7, 1881 newspaper excerpt

Silas J. Morse, of this town, has received a patent on his "Railway Station Indicator." It is a device 14 x 18 inches in a cabinet case, 3 inches thick, placed in the end of the car facing the passenger, arranged in four sections so that one can tell whether the train is express, special or accommodation, the name of the next station or if a change of cars is necessary. At each change a gong strikes to attract the attention, and the whole arrangement is one which will prove of very great advantage to all railroad travellers, and will undoubtedly be largely adopted by the railroad of the country. He is at present engaged in advertising the same, by the sending through the mails of circulars descriptive of his valuable invention.

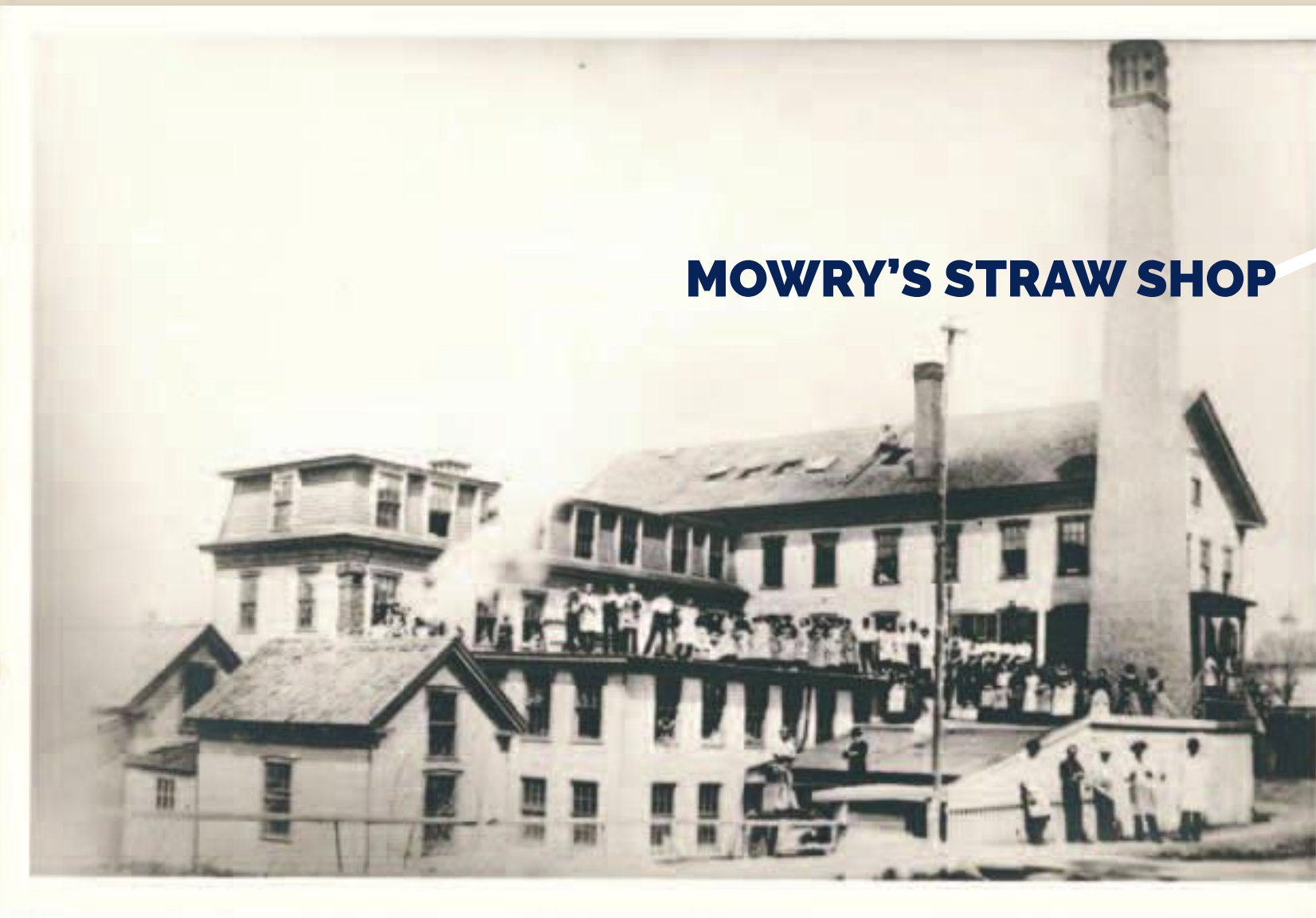
(No Model.)
S. J. MORSE,
Railway Station Indicator.
No. 235,375. Patented Dec. 14, 1880.



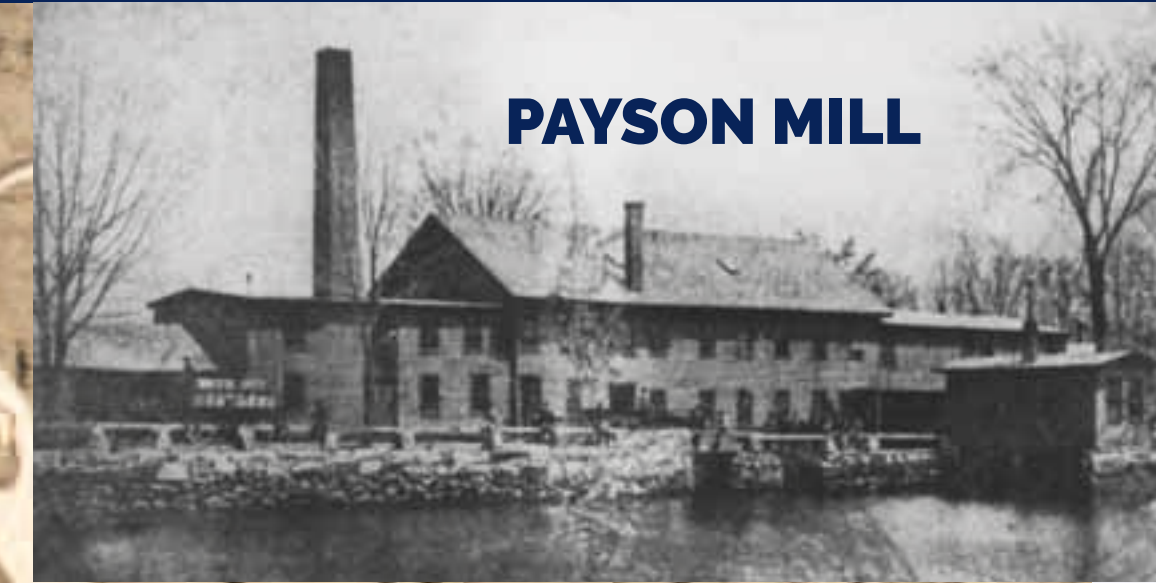
Witnesses,
Wm. F. Andrews
S. B. Sampson

Inventor
Silas J. Morse.
By *[Signature]*

In September of 1890, the first labor strike to hit Holliston was begun by the machine girls at Mowry's Straw Shop on Elm Street. The issues involved wage cuts, which management stated were necessary following sagging wholesale prices that resulted from cheap imported straw hats flooding the market.



MOWRY'S STRAW SHOP



PAYSON MILL



FACTORY POND

BOGASTOW

LINDEN POND



This ticket is from a book by Robert Willoughby Jones, Boston & Albany: The New York Central in New England, Volume I, (1997), Pine Tree Press. The Milford-to-Holliston ticket was issued June 17, 1954, at Milford. The distance between the main depots in Milford and Holliston was 6.54 miles. (William T. Clynes collection)

In June 1958, NYC RS-3 No. 8346 pulls a B&A commuter train over Bogastow Brook across the 8-Arch Bridge. The bridge, actually a viaduct built of pink granite from Milford, was a famous landmark on the line and is now part of the Upper Charles Rail Trail. (Norton D. Clark collection)



This photo was taken from land across from the intersection of Elm and Woodland Streets—as if you were standing on the trail facing Town Hall. The square house on the left is still standing there. The map (Library of Congress) shows many large factories interspersed with large private homes. These were the homes of factory owners, not workers.

www.hollistontrails.org



NO.	NAME	NO.	NAME
1	CLAYTON	11	WATER
2	WATER	12	WATER
3	WATER	13	WATER
4	WATER	14	WATER
5	WATER	15	WATER
6	WATER	16	WATER
7	WATER	17	WATER
8	WATER	18	WATER
9	WATER	19	WATER
10	WATER	20	WATER

Upper Charles Rail Trail “Casey at the Bat”

Mudville, as mentioned in the poem “Casey at the Bat,” is the area where Irish rail workers settled in Holliston. The term might have referred to the muddy conditions of the neighborhood, which has a high water table and brooks, or it might have been targeted as a derogatory slur against the poor immigrants who lived there.

Although there are competing claims, Holliston continues to maintain its attachment to Casey and the fact that Ernest Lawrence Thayer wrote the poem in Worcester, Massachusetts as newspaper filler for William Randolph Hearst, a college buddy. The Thayer family had a farm in Mendon, and his mother was a member of the Darling family who owned the wool mill in Holliston. If you venture to 57 School Street you can see a statue created to honor Casey, commissioned by a native of Mudville who is also of Irish descent.

Casey at the Bat: A Ballad of the Republic Sung in the Year 1888 —Ernest Thayer

This is the complete poem as it originally appeared in The Daily Examiner (June 3, 1888).

After publication, various versions with minor changes were produced.

*The outlook wasn't brilliant for the Mudville nine that day;
the score stood four to two, with but one inning more to play.
And then when Cooney died at first, and Barrows did the same,
a sickly silence fell upon the patrons of the game.*

*A straggling few got up to go in deep despair. The rest
clung to that hope which springs eternal in the human breast;
they thought, if only Casey could get but a whack at that —
they'd put up even money, now, with Casey at the bat.*

*But Flynn preceded Casey, as did also Jimmy Blake,
and the former was a lulu and the latter was a cake,
so upon that stricken multitude grim melancholy sat,
for there seemed but little chance of Casey's getting to the bat.*

*But Flynn let drive a single, to the wonderment of all,
and Blake, the much despised, tore the cover off the ball;
and when the dust had lifted, and the men saw what had occurred,
there was Jimmy safe at second and Flynn a-hugging third.*

*Then from five thousand throats and more there rose a lusty yell;
it rumbled through the valley, it rattled in the dell;
it knocked upon the mountain and recoiled upon the flat,
for Casey, mighty Casey, was advancing to the bat.*

*There was ease in Casey's manner as he stepped into his place;
there was pride in Casey's bearing and a smile on Casey's face.
And when, responding to the cheers, he lightly doffed his hat,
no stranger in the crowd could doubt 'twas Casey at the bat.*

*Ten thousand eyes were on him as he rubbed his hands with dirt;
five thousand tongues applauded when he wiped them on his shirt.
Then while the writhing pitcher ground the ball into his hip,
defiance gleamed in Casey's eye, a sneer curled Casey's lip.*

*And now the leather-covered sphere came hurtling through the air,
and Casey stood a-watching it in haughty grandeur there.
Close by the sturdy batsman the ball unheeded sped—
“That ain't my style,” said Casey. “Strike one,” the umpire said.*

*From the benches, black with people, there went up a muffled roar,
like the beating of the storm-waves on a stern and distant shore.
“Kill him! Kill the umpire!” shouted someone on the stand;
and it's likely they'd have killed him had not Casey raised his hand.*

*With a smile of Christian charity great Casey's visage shone;
he stilled the rising tumult; he bade the game go on;
he signaled to the pitcher, and once more the spheroid flew;
but Casey still ignored it, and the umpire said: “Strike two.”*

*“Fraud!” cried the maddened thousands, and Echo answered fraud;
but one scornful look from Casey and the audience was awed.
They saw his face grow stern and cold, they saw his muscles strain,
and they knew that Casey wouldn't let that ball go by again.*

*The sneer is gone from Casey's lip, his teeth are clenched in hate;
he pounds with cruel violence his bat upon the plate.
And now the pitcher holds the ball, and now he lets it go,
and now the air is shattered by the force of Casey's blow.*

*Oh, somewhere in this favored land the sun is shining bright;
the band is playing somewhere, and somewhere hearts are light,
and somewhere men are laughing, and somewhere children shout;
but there is no joy in Mudville — mighty Casey has struck out.*



Holliston has a Mudville Olde Tyme ball team, organized in 2001, that plays under the 1858 baseball rules and competes against other community teams from around the country.

www.hollistontrails.org

Upper Charles Rail Trail Mudville

When the railroad began construction in Holliston in 1846, it brought new residents to town, many of Irish descent who had fled the potato famine in Ireland by immigrating to the U.S. As construction progressed, many workers brought over their families and settled into houses clustered along the railway. And so the neighborhood of Mudville was founded by those stalwart railroad workers who, after the line was completed, remained and found work in the boot, shoe, and straw hat factories that provided employment in Holliston. The earliest local mention of the name of Mudville was found in a poem published in the *Holliston Advertiser* that told of the Irish voters' defeat over an education article at the Town Meeting of March 17, 1856.

Overseas competition hurt the U.S. shoe market. The only remaining factory building from Holliston's heyday as the largest producer of shoes in the U.S. is located on Water Street. Construction started in early 1891 in hopes of attracting a major shoe manufacturer. There was a good supply of experienced workers available.

In the building on Water Street, the first floor was used for sole leather cutting; the second floor for bottoming rooms and offices; the third floor for finishing and shipping; and the fourth floor for cutting and stitching. No pillars or posts obstructed the floor space. Each worker had a window in front of them, as an effort to provide an improved working atmosphere. The total cost, paid by the shareholders, was \$22,000. The grand opening of the new factory was a well-attended, catered party in November 1891. Over 150 couples danced on the makeshift third floor ballroom to music by Allen's Orchestra of Natick and the Holliston Brass Band.

I.A. Beals Shoe Company of Brockton transferred their operation to Holliston that December 1891. Fifty families were expected to make the move, along with many single workers who would be in need of housing.

Manufacturing began in earnest and with optimism, and many previously idle shoe shop workers of Holliston found gainful employment once again. I.A. Beals encountered some unanticipated problems, conducting business in Holliston incurred higher costs than expected, so Beals and company returned to Brockton after 18 months, long before a reasonable return had been seen by the investors.

After housing tenants for several years, the Water Street building was vacant until Arthur A. Williams moved his Goodwill Shoe Company to the spacious factory building in 1898. Williams expanded the facility with an additional building on the west side of the street and connected the two buildings with a much-admired tunnel.

The Goodwill Shoe Company provided steady employment in a stable economic environment. Arthur Williams had one of the longest and most successful business records in Holliston history and became Holliston's first "moneyed man" of the twentieth century.

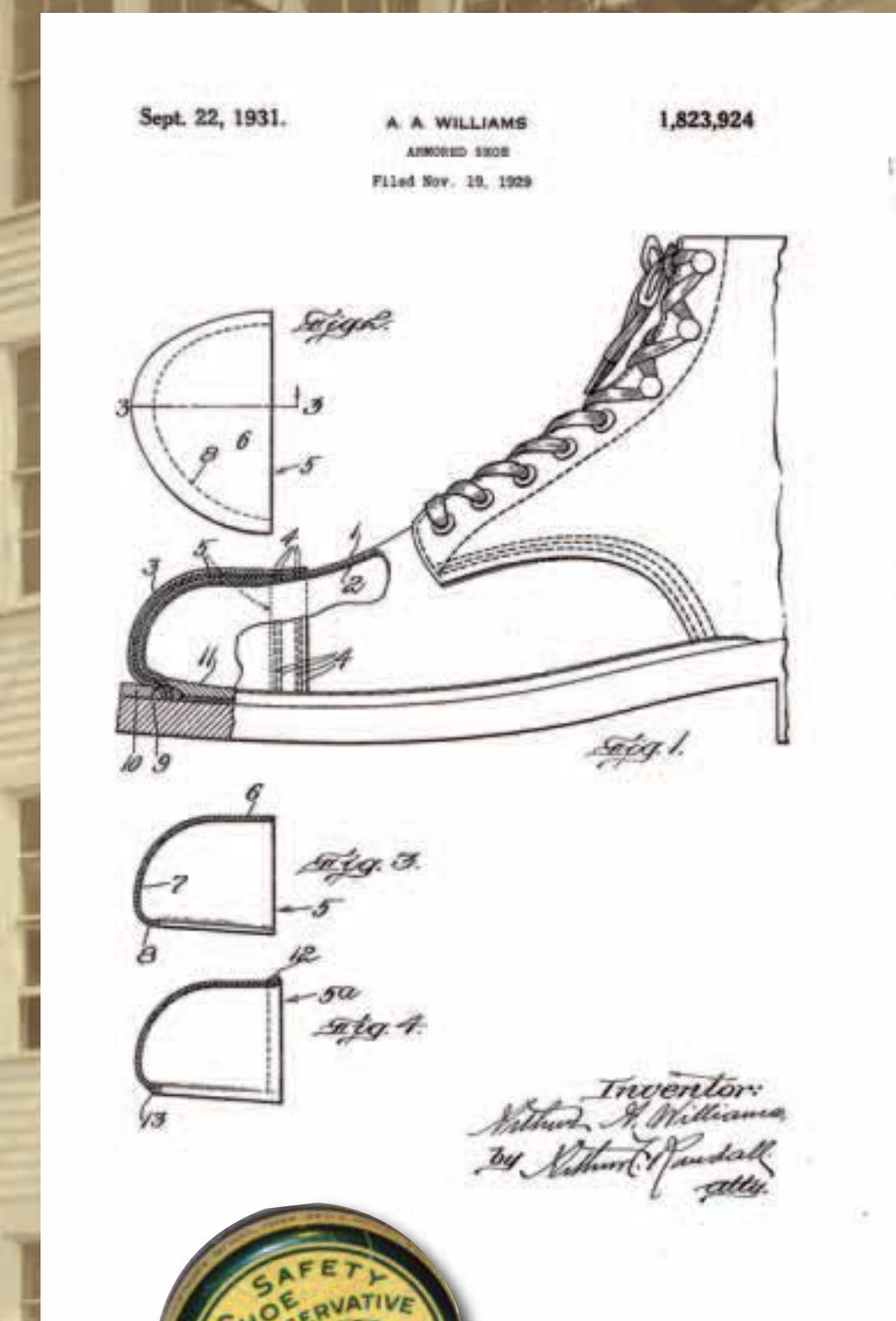
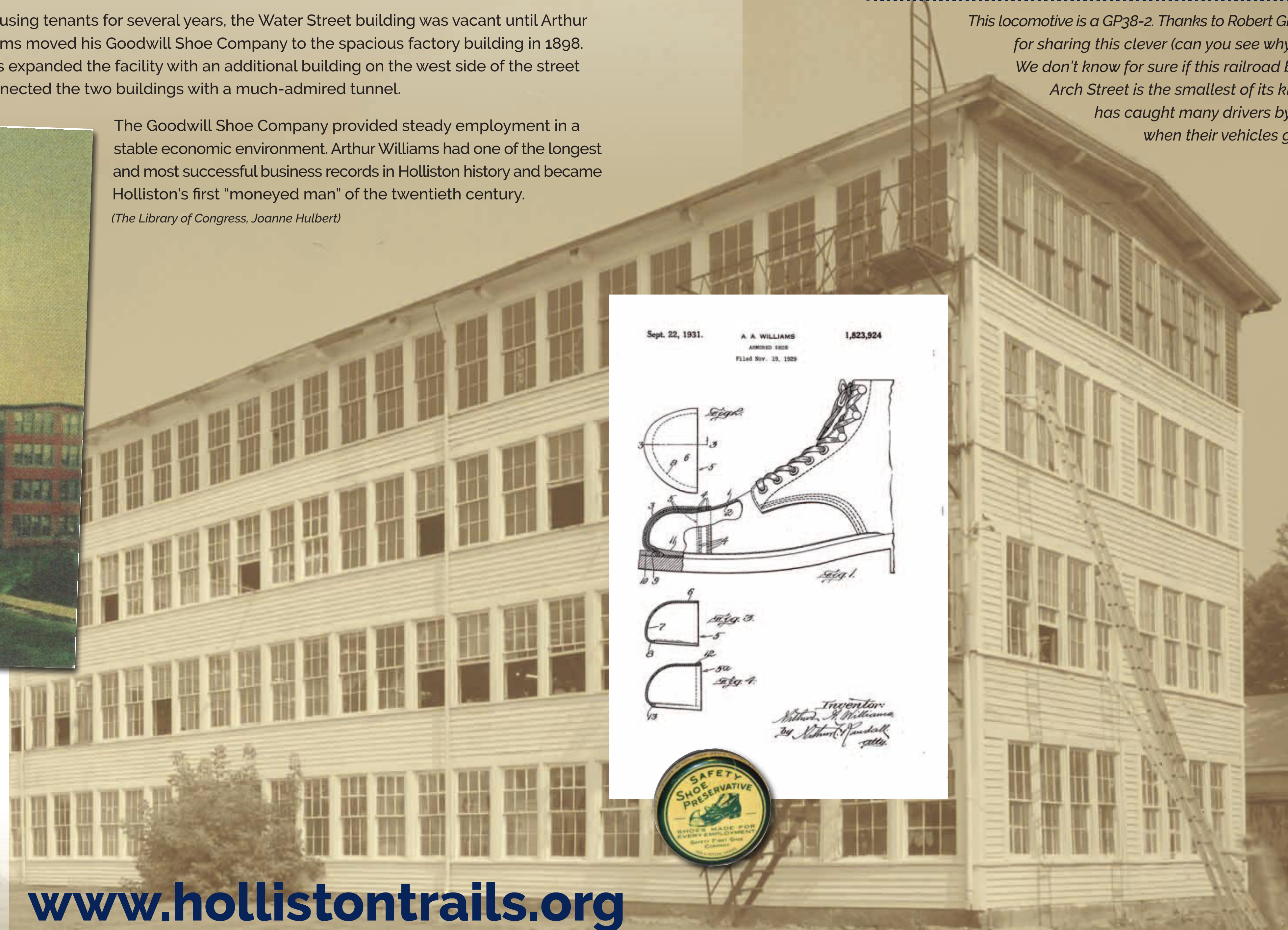
(The Library of Congress, Joanne Hulbert)



This locomotive is a GP38-2. Thanks to Robert Grabinskas for sharing this clever (can you see why?) photo. We don't know for sure if this railroad bridge on Arch Street is the smallest of its kind, but it has caught many drivers by surprise when their vehicles get stuck!



This landmark building on Water Street is an example of a large shoe factory, built at the peak of shoe industry production, for the manufacture of heavy footwear for farmers and sportsmen. The two wood-frame buildings on either side of Water Street were originally connected by a second-story bridge above the street. The building on the east side is four stories high with a slate-roofed tower and approximately 190 feet long; the building on the west side is three stories high and approximately 100 feet long. Both still show their original clapboards and 6/6 window sashes.



Upper Charles Rail Trail Phipps Hill Tunnel

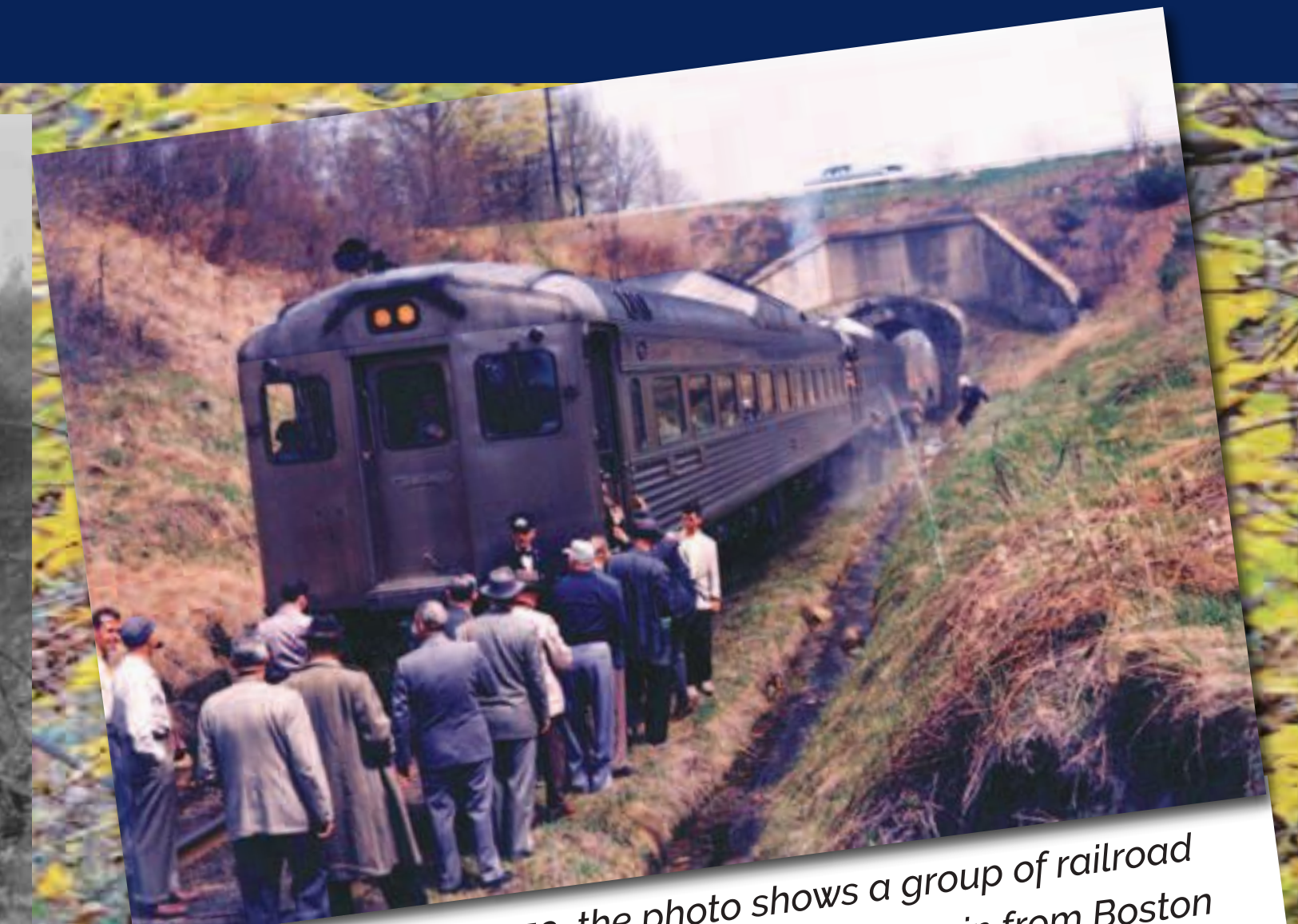
Typically, railroad workers traveled from town to town as construction progressed, but the Phipps Hill Tunnel proved to be a big challenge. It took one year to blast through the hill to lay the rail and build the tunnel under Highland Street. During that year, many of the workers took other jobs in Holliston to make a living, and these Irish immigrants settled here for the long-term. In fact the supervising engineer in charge of bringing the railroad through Holliston to Milford, including the construction of the trestle and tunnel, was Roger Shea. His descendants are living here today.

These immigrants fueled the industrial development of this town as shoe, boot, woolen fabric, straw, and nail factories flourished. The rail company built many small houses where 30–40 men would sleep. After the rail workers moved out, those houses became homes to the Irish families. Some built small shoe shops in their backyards where wives and children would do piece work while the fathers might be working elsewhere. At one point, Holliston was the largest shoe manufacturing town in the country.

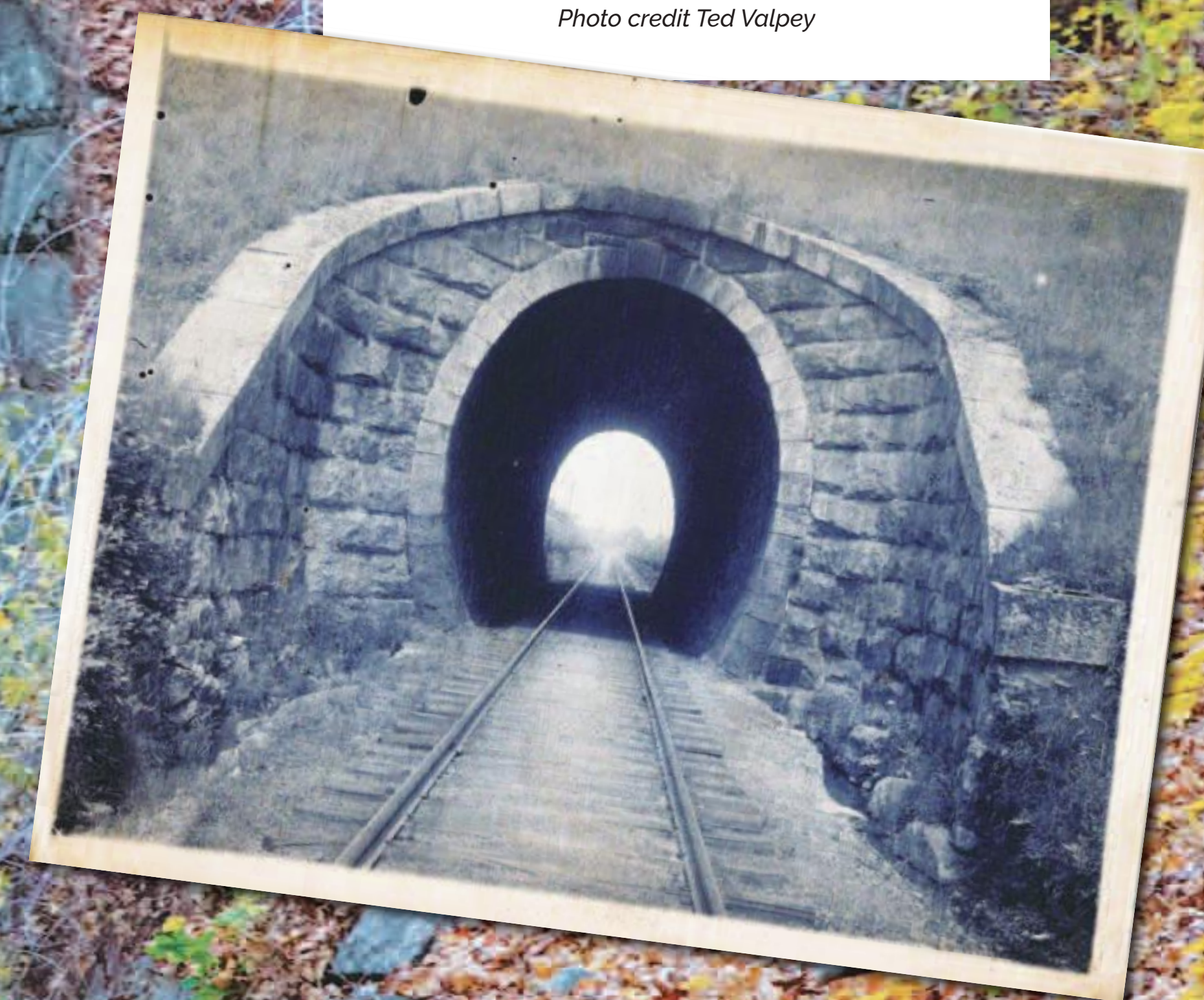


This 1940s photograph shows a steam engine at the tunnel with a mudslide from the adjacent hill blocking the tracks.

Photo credit Ted Valpey



Dated April 27, 1959, the photo shows a group of railroad enthusiasts who organized an excursion train from Boston through Natick and Framingham and included the Milford line. These are New York Central "Beeliner" RDC cars, Nos. M-452 and M-461. Photo credit George Hildreth



Opening of the Milford Branch Railroad

On Saturday morning the Directors of the Worcester Railroad, with a company of invited guests, left the city to celebrate the opening of the Milford Branch Railroad. This Branch leaves the Worcester road at Framingham, 21 miles from Boston, and runs in a southerly direction through Holliston to Milford, 12 miles. The road is quite straight, with curves only of a large radius; and a considerable part of the way is quite level, the highest grade being about 35 feet to the mile. The country along the line is not particularly interesting, the road passing many miles of almost unbroken forest, in places almost as wild as the interior of New Hampshire can furnish.

Some five or six miles from Framingham it passes over a beautiful and substantial stone bridge, of about 150 feet in length, supported by eight arches of solid masonry. The village of Holliston, with its handsome church and Academy and its neat white houses, is just beyond. Here was a large gathering of men and women, accompanied by a band of music, ready to welcome the arrival of the cars, and to accompany the Boston party to Milford.

Soon after passing Holliston the cars entered a cut of nearly half a mile in length, and, in places, thirty or forty feet in depth. This was proved the most serious obstacle with which the company have had to contend in constructing this Branch; for, though the material of the hill was earth, it was of a character more difficult to remove than rock itself. In the centre of this cut is a tunnel of about one hundred feet in length, of remarkable neat and substantial workmanship, which supports a carriage road which passes over it. There are, also, several rock cuts of considerable extent, through which the road passes before reaching Milford.

(American Traveller, pg. 2, July 8, 1848.)

Upper Charles Rail Trail Wenakeening Woods



Wenakeening Woods is 109 acres of land preserved by The Trustees of Reservations. You're standing at the north edge of Wenakeening Woods where it connects to the Upper Charles Rail Trail via a natural-surface path. This land was occupied by the Nipmuc tribe when the first English/European settlers arrived in what is now Holliston, with a settlement along the shores of Lake Winthrop. Local lore says that Native Americans knew the pond as Lake Wenakeening, translated as "Smile of the Great Spirit." However, recent research indicates otherwise and there is no documentation that the name was given by the Native Americans. It now appears most likely that local resident Abner Morse created the name in the early 19th century. He called his property and the lake "Wenakeening," perhaps because it provided a romantic sound.

Holliston did not seem so very remote from the theater of active warfare. Mrs. Simeon Cutler used to relate that the day the British burned Charlestown, owing to some atmospheric peculiarity the glare was reflected in her Holliston home with sufficient brightness that she could see to pick up a pin from the chamber floor. However provoking to the general [George Washington] the independent ways of the militia may have been, no one can deny that there was good excuse for their desire to revisit home at short intervals. In Holliston during the winter of 1775-76 there were literally no able-bodied men left in the village. The entire male population consisted of one old man and one overgrown lad of fourteen. Mrs. Simeon



If you are standing with your back to the Wenakeening Woods kiosk, look through the woods and you will see the Simeon Cutler home.

Cutler had to care for her husband's livestock; and she recorded that the calves were growing too strong and lusty for her, while there was nobody in town able to put the young monsters out of mischief by transforming them into veal. And at least once, upon arrival home in the course of an unauthorized leave of absence, when young Lieut. Simeon Cutler was barred from his domestic kitchen by a door that refused to open, he was greeted by his wife's voice from above the stairs, and was told that the cause of the barricade was—Indians. A band of vagrant red-skins [sic] had that evening taken possession of the lower part of the house, had crowded the rightful mistress of the edifice and the children into the upper story, and were then sprawled asleep all over the kitchen floor, with a sentinel lying against the door to prevent anyone entering. "Holliston Soldiers in Revolutionary War," by Rev. Frederick Morse Cutler, read before the Holliston Historical Society.

— As published in the Framingham Evening News, July 1, 1915.



The Breezy Meadows Camp in Holliston was a summer camp managed by the Robert Gould Shaw House for underprivileged children from the Greater Boston area and Providence, Rhode Island. Reverend Michael E. Haynes attended the camp as a young adult, then later served as the program director from 1951-1962. Haynes's photographs feature camp attendees, staff, and recreational activities, including Nature Study programs and talent shows.



In 1888, Kate Sanborn purchased a farm here named Green Hills and, after a short time, moved across the street to another farm named Breezy Meadows. This "gentleman's farm" was featured in several of Ms. Sanborn's books and her home was located on what is now the Betania II property in Medway that adjoins Wenakeening Woods.

The past agricultural use of the land remains evident. Farmers cleared the area and constructed stone walls throughout the property. An old cranberry bog is located onsite as are foundation holes associated with the farmhouse and outbuildings. Today, the land supports a mixture of hardwoods, primarily maples and oaks, as well as white pines.

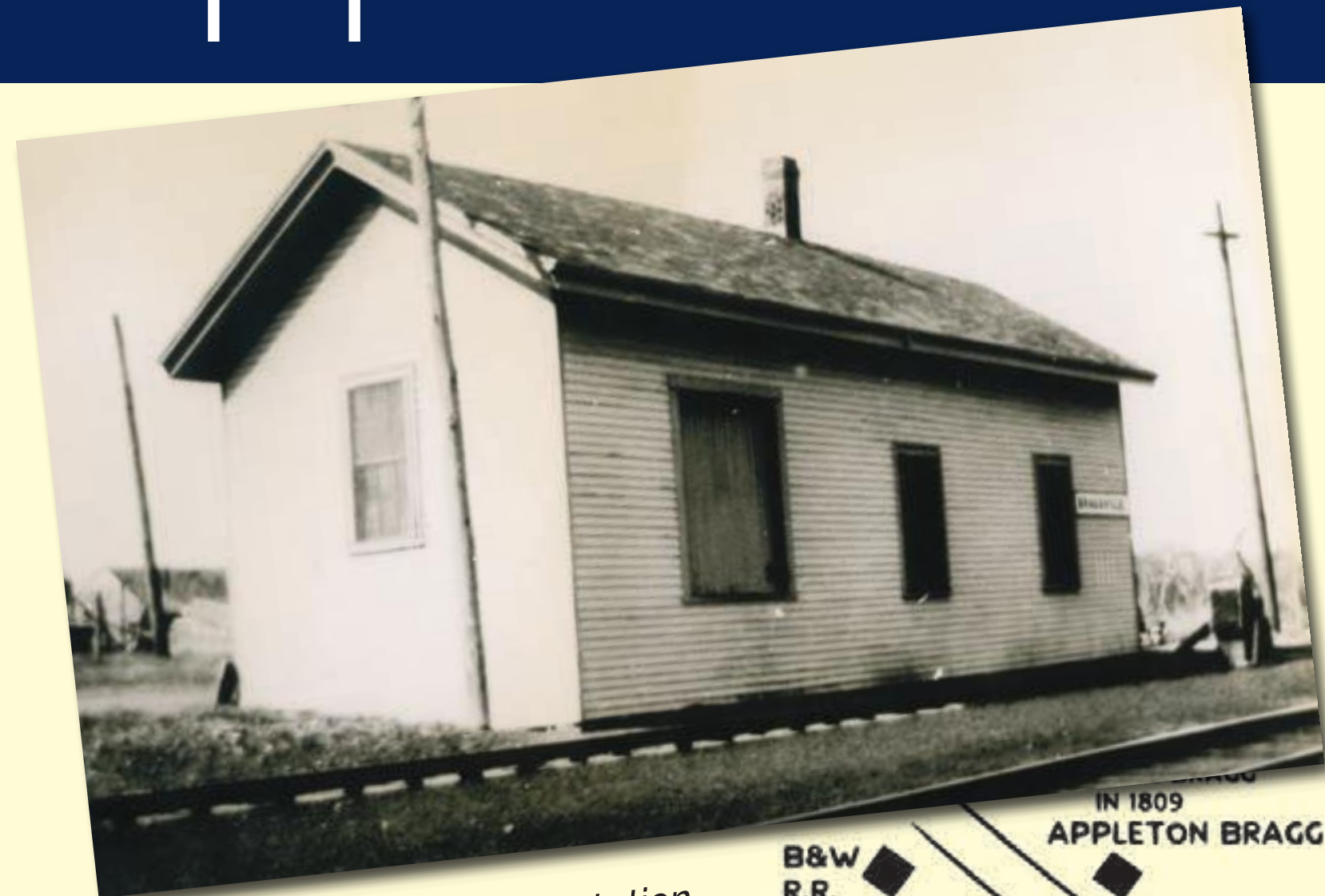
Kate Sanborn

Kate Sanborn, author, lecturer, and farmer, lived in Holliston from 1888 to 1917. A biography of Sanborn was written by Holliston native Shirley Hamlet Chipman, *Kate Sanborn and Breezy Meadows Farms*.



Sanborn wrote *Adopting an Abandoned Farm* and *Abandoning an Adopted Farm*, which Chipman described as "... delightfully humorous and may be counted as among the early contributions to 'back to the land' writings." Sanborn was the originator of Current Event classes in literary clubs, which became common in many U.S. cities in the late 1800s. She wrote over 40 lectures, but among her best-known works were the two books of her original ideas regarding farming, which she put into practice on her Breezy Meadows farm.

Upper Charles Rail Trail Braggville

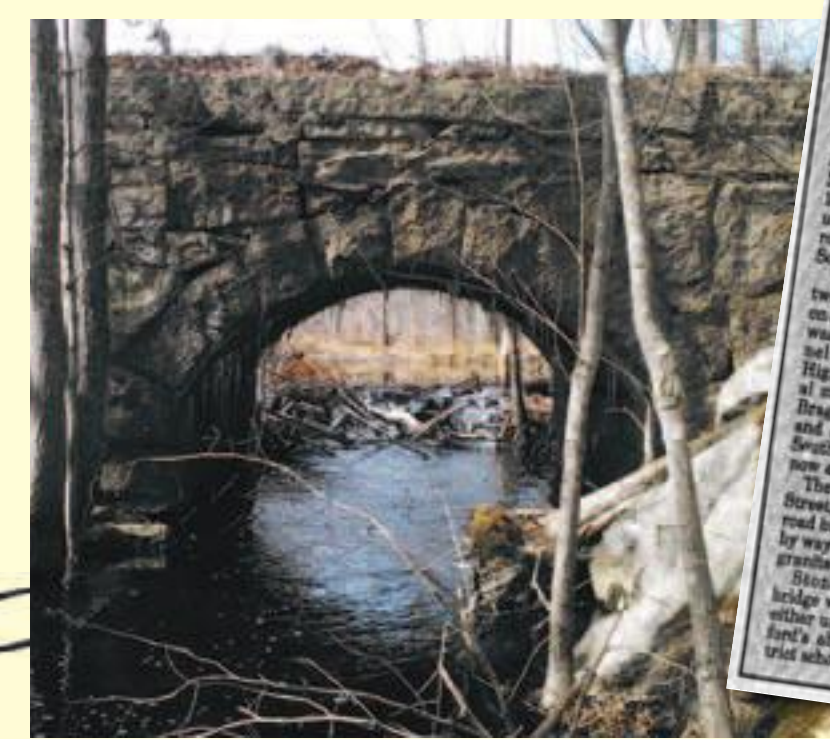


Postcard of Braggville rail station

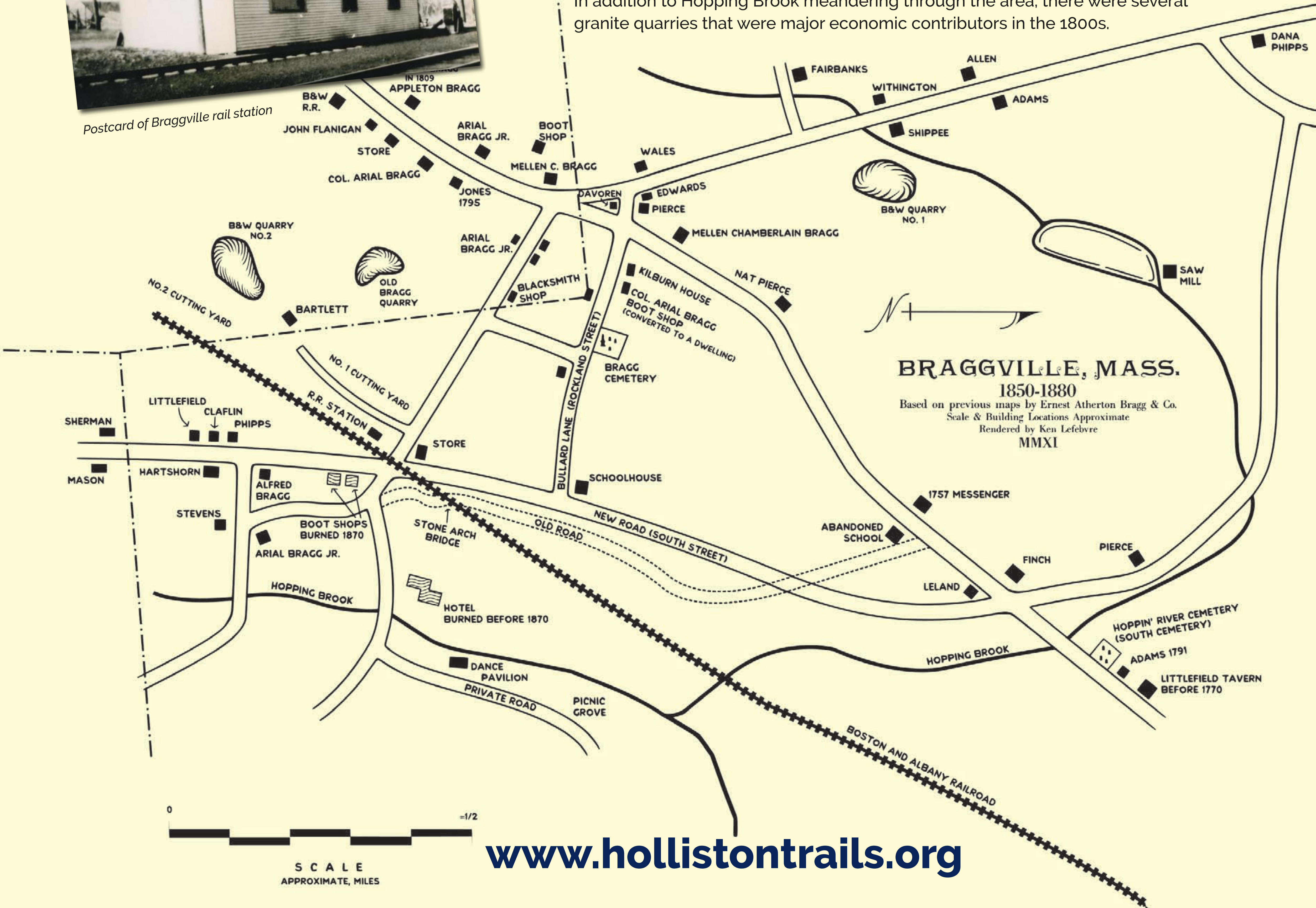
Welcome to Braggville!

Braggville appears on maps even to this day; the village overlaps today's town boundaries for Milford, Medway, and Holliston. It was named for Ariel Bragg, the first to produce and deliver wholesale shoes (button boots) around the region in the 1790s. Over several generations, the Bragg family built multiple houses in the village.

In addition to Hopping Brook meandering through the area, there were several granite quarries that were major economic contributors in the 1800s.



Three bridges lie under the Rail Trail through the Braggville area. Rediscovered in 1979 was a bridge that was eliminated and filled in to blend with the sloping embankment when South Street was straightened.



Holliston had a milk run at Summer Street, allowing the rail car to pick up and deliver milk to Boston. Pictured above is Rein Kampersal and below is the rehabbed barn of the Kampersal Dairy just a few steps off the Rail Trail on Kampersal Road. Descendants live in the adjoining house. Along Kampersal Road you will also pass Kampersal Field, which is used by local teams and the extended Kampersal family for gatherings.

