

# The Ballard Vale Gazette

VOL. 3

BALLARDVALE, MASS

NOVEMBER 10, 1985

The Ballard Vale Gazette  
published by the  
Ballard Vale Village  
Improvement Society  
Ballardvale, Mass.  
for the  
150th Anniversary Celebration

Edited by: Ruth A. Sharpe  
Charlotte Tynning  
Robert S. Hamilton, Sr.  
Our Village, Then--

Excerpts from an article written in December 1867 entitled the "History of our village," describes the lofty spires and towering chimneys where just a few years ago there was nothing but swamp. The Shawsheen River, portrayed as majestic, rolled on through the valleys, unobstructed by any artificial breastwork to impede its progress, and only one house existed on the east side of the river, that being connected to the Grist Mill and occupied the site of the Ballard Vale Factory which produced fine flannels. This company produced the first all-wool delaine goods ever produced in America. The Boston and Maine originally ran east of the village and was relocated to run directly through the busy settlement which now had a machine shop, a famous hotel, the Beedle (now the Raynor House), the best managed woolen manufactures in this country, an extensive file and manufacturing establishment, a crucible, fire brick and stove polish manufacturer with worldwide reputation, a hat factory, shoe and gas companies, six stoves, a tin shop, blacksmith, a barber shop, one church, four religious societies, a temperance group, and to the disgrace of all--four rum shops. The crowning glory

will be the public common on Pole Hill, fifty acres where in the centre will be a magnificent flagstaff, to bear aloft our national emblem.

The origin of the name of the village refers to the mill and house owned by the Ballard family. From his name and the natural lay of the land arose the now celebrated Ballard Vale. The name of the river came from the sharp edged grass called "saw skin" by the Indians located one mile south of here near the farm of Benjamin Burtt. Thus came the name we know, Shawsheen.

## The First Ballardvale Librarian to be Honored

The late Martha D. Byington, who died in 1950 at the age of 77, will be honored by the Town of Andover, on Monday, November 11th, 1985 as part of the annual Veteran's Day observance at the Ballard Vale Green, commencing at 11:30 AM.

Born in Westford, VT, graduate of Mt. Holyoke College, she assumed the librarian position in 1913 and remained there for almost 30 years.

A flagpole, to be dedicated in her memory, has recently been erected on the site of the original branch library. The principal address will be given by Brig. General John E. Haggerty (Ret.), brother of Franklin Haggerty, of Andover Street. State and local officials, a military honor guard, veteran's groups, the Andover High School Band and a Clan McPherson pipe will be participating in the service of observance.

Richard J. Bowen

## Our Village 1875 to Now

### Unforgettable People, Places, & Politics

Local stores in Ballard Vale were impressive places, and were quite often visited by unforgettable people back in the 1920's & 1930's.

J. W. Stark & Sons, Meats & Provisions, successor to J. C. Stark, was their name and the sale of prime beef was their game. Their butcher shop was as clean as a whistle. It had gas lamps, a freshly scrubbed meat display table, and a round red oak chopping block. The hamburger was hand ground with a dash of pork for flavor and juice, and it was always ground twice. A kid could earn a hot dog if he ground up a few pounds of hamburger for Mr. Stark. When Mr. Stark died, the secret recipe for corning beef died with him.

Politics was always the main subject at Stark's Market with Irving Shaw, Joe Stott, and Bill Ready participating each day. Bill Ready's horse, "Kitty," was always out front hitched to the buggy. She waited for Bill to win an argument once in a while, get his meat and Lawrence Evening Tribune, make a "U" turn to the horse watering trough to let "Kitty" have a drink, and head on home. Amos Loomer, Purveyor of Prime Beef & Pork, stopped by once a week with his meat truck, just to keep them honest. George Bruce used to kid them about rigging the price of hamburger at \$.20 per pound.

Continued on page 5.

## Thumbnail Sketch of the Ballardvale Village Improvement Society

On Dec. 14, 1915 Ballardvale residents met with the Vis Trustees to organize a group to work for the betterment of their village. By April 1916 the citizens of the vale had shown so much interest that they decided to form their own Society to be called the Ballardvale Village Improvement Society (V.I.S.). They met in the "Old Schoolhouse" building with a large membership. In 1919 V.I.S. had a slogan "Every Family Plant a Tree". The Society set out over 30 Maples some of which are still lining our streets.

Over the years the "Old Schoolhouse" was a busy place with activities for young and old, such as dances, shows, political rallies and town improvement plans. During the '60's social activities for teenagers with Saturday Night Dances on the playgrounds or in the Community Building was a new venture. In the '70's a slogan was coined, "I'm Proud to Live in Ballardvale" and a new objective was set, "Up the Shawsheen River".

So on to the issues of the '80's with its Pole Hill subdivisions, school busing, on-going traffic concerns, loss of the Community Center and relocating of the Branch Library, sponsoring a Blood Mobile, and Village Clean-up Days. There is no end to the concerns that face the Organization that still has the Social and Civic Betterment of their village as their goal, as they celebrate 70 years of dedication to their town in April 1986.

— Ruth A. Sharpe

"It's down in the hollow,  
It's there you will find  
If the path you will follow,  
And don't look behind,  
Barren and aspen trees  
And bushes so fond,  
The pride of our country,  
We call it Ballardvale."

1875

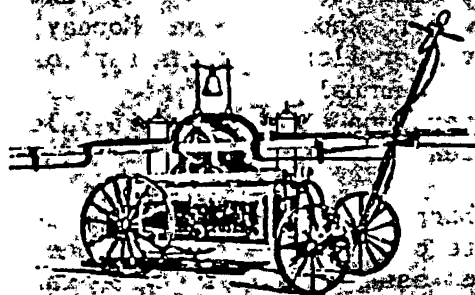
## Did You Know?

That "Skeet Shooting" was invented and perfected in Ballardvale, until a chicken farmer complained of his chicken's distraction when meets were held. As the sport grew in popularity an award was offered by a Boston sport magazine to name the new sport, and the winner was a woman who suggested "Skeet" which means shoot in Danish.

That J. Putnam Bradlee, proprietor of the BV Mills opened his library of 1000 books to the residents of Ballardvale in 1878 and his Mansion House Library continued in use until the Branch Library was opened.

## FIRE ENGINE ("Hand Tub")

William C. Hunneman of Roxbury, Mass. made this engine No. 134 for Cambridge, Mass. in 1829. Thirty years later, J. Putnam Bradlee purchased the "Hand Tub" as fire protection for his mills in Ballardvale. The engine was both hand pulled and hand pumped. Can you figure out how the engine pumped water?



## Ballardvale Advertisements

### A. M. WINTHROP.

If you want your Boots fixed cheap and neat,  
Patronize Winthrop, on River Street.  
He'll mend your shoe, or bad worn boot,  
And his charges will your purses suit.

Ballardvale.

### A. H. BROWN.

BALLARD VALE & BOSTON EXPRESS.

Office in Boston, No. 5 Congress Square.

Ballardvale, Mass.

### A. N. BEAN.

LIVERY STABLE.

Horses and Carriages to Let.

Marland Street,

Ballardvale.

## Geographical Description of Ballardvale

The principal town in Massachusetts is Ballardvale, so called because the boys are accustomed to sit on the fences and sing ballads, the girls wear vail.

The surface is greatly diversified; along the coast are many extensive swamps, which produce large quantities of cabbage and mosquitos.

The highest mountain peak is Pole Hill, there is an excellent road over this mountain, which leads into an old cellar.

Its coastline, bordering on the Shawshin, is extensive and indented by many small gulfs and bays.

It raises many boys which are used principally to support the fences and make the depot attractive.

The principal imports are cars, the exports are water lilies in the summer. The climate is salubrious-the moral atmosphere is clear; the gossips all being defunct. There are no grasshoppers!

1875

## Ballardvale Today

Ample Rail Service to and From Lawrence and Boston

Post Office  
Fire Department  
South School  
Churches

St. Joseph's

Ballardvale United Church

Ballardvale Branch Library  
Many businesses

Still striving to remain the  
Village of Ballardvale

## Did You Know?

That the Ballard Vale Machine Shop was built in 1847 of stone that was brought four miles through the woods and that in 1848 they made a number of locomotives for the Androstoggin and Kennebec Railroad.

That the first successful machine-cut steel files were made at the Whipple File Co. in Ballard Vale in the 1850's.

That the Ballard Vale Lithia Spring Water Works stated in 1880 and furnished the only carbonated water carried by the United States Navy when they went on their world cruise in 1912.

A Great Italian Tenor writes, (Translated)  
GENTLEMEN:

I make it my duty to express to you my gratitude for the excellent results which I have obtained, and am still obtaining from the use of your Ballardvale Lithia Water.

You can recommend it, with full confidence, to all persons having *Arthritic or Rheumatic dispositions*, and I am confident that, like myself, they will congratulate themselves after its use, which is both agreeable and easy.

FRANCESCO TANAGNO.  
Milan, December 18, 1896.



ST. MARY'S CHURCH, Lawrence, Mass.  
BALLARDALE LITHIA WATER CO.

Gentlemen:—We have been using your Spring Water ever since it was first placed in the market about five years ago. It has now become almost a necessity in our house, and we cheerfully recommend it for all that has been claimed for it, as a fine table water.

Yours,

JAS. S. O'BRIEN, U.S.A.

1875

## Ballard Vale Advertisements.

J. P. BRADLEE,

Manufacturer of

FINE WHITE FLANNELS,

Downills, Zephyrs, Shakers, etc.

F. G. HAINES & CO.,

Dealers in all kinds of

Groceries, Dry Goods,

Hard Ware, Boots and Shoes, Ready-Made Clothing, etc.

BALLARD VALE, - - MASS.

J. MORRISON,

Dealer in

DRY and FANCY GOODS,

Boots and Shoes, Clothing, Stationery, Confectionery, Nuts, Fruit, etc.

Ballard Vale, - - - Mass.

FLOWERS and PLANTS

BINGHAM'S, on Tewksbury Street,

is the place to buy House Plants. Summer is coming, and you'll want Flowers and Tomato Plants, and all that class of goods. BINGHAM sells them at Low Prices.

GREENE & WOODLIN,

Dealers in

Choice Family Groceries,

West India Goods and Country Produce, Crockery, Glass and Wooden Ware,

School House Building, Ballard Vale, Mass.

WOOD.

The undersigned have on hand, and for sale,

Hard and Soft Wood of all kinds,

in quantities to suit purchasers. Orders left at our Store will receive prompt attention.

GREENE & WOODLIN.

FOR SALE.

Horse Farm Wagon,

LIGHT CONCORD WAGON,

ONE HORSE POWER, Nearly New.

Inquire of or address

H. M. HAYWARD, Ballard Vale, Mass.

JOSEPH T. LOVEJOY

MILK DEALER

Ballard Vale, Mass.

## Did You Know?

That trains were scheduled to discharge and pick up passengers attending dances held at Parker's Canoe House and Dance Hall located off Andover Street in the center of Ballard Vale.

That the first railroad opened in the summer of 1836 from Wilmington to Andover, entered Ballard Vale in the rear of the South School and that the original Railway Station still stands on Andover Street.

That in 1848 the Ballard Vale District School had 178 pupils and only 2 teachers, who received a salary of \$40 per month.

That in 1890 the new Ballard Vale School was then only school in Andover furnished with running Town water.

That the Ballard Vale Stone-ware Mfg. Co. handpainted blue decorations on their jugs and crocks in the style of Vermont's famous Bennington Potters.

That Ballard Vale had some of the most glorious Fourth of July celebrations held in this area. Their bonfires, Horribles' Parades, and water sports, especially the canoe-tilting contests, attracted hundreds from miles around.

That wonderful concerts were presented at the Ballard Vale Mills Stand and that the Ballard Vale Fife and Drum Corps was one of the best.

1875

Enigma.

I am composed of 22 letters. M 4, 20, 13, is a weight; my 1, 7, 6, 14, 19, is a military standard or flag; my 3, 16, 10, is a nickname; my 15, 2, 22, is a measure of distance; my 1, 9, 21, is a female name; my 12, 1, 18, is not desirable to be. My whole is of incalculable value to Ballard Vale.

Answer to an Enigma on  
Page 5

## History of Our Churches

The Ballard Vale United Church on Hall Avenue and Clark Road, erected in 1967, represents the confluence of two denominations. The first was the Methodist Episcopal which held informal services as early as 1829, again in the 1840's and received its charter in February 1850. The other, representing several denominations, was the Ballard Vale Union Society formed in March of 1850, becoming the Union Congregation Church on December 31, 1854. It was the fourth church of that denomination in town. Following a century of independence, the two churches merged on April 2, 1955 to form the Ballard Vale United Church and remains affiliated with both founding conferences. The present structure at Hall Avenue and Clark Road was occupied in November 1967.

St. Joseph's Roman Catholic Church was erected in 1881 to fill the needs of parishioners living in the southern section of the town, although masses had been celebrated since 1866 in a hall over the Boston and Maine depot. The priests traveled by horseback weekly, but by the late 1870's the hall had become inadequate and a small, wooden frame mission was built on High Street in 1881. Like many of the churches in Andover carriage sheds for the horses and buggies were built for those attending mass, some coming from as far away as Tewksbury and Wilmington. St. Joseph's has always been a mission church, with a priest in attendance from St. Augustine's.

### J. S. STARK, PROVISION DEALER.

Beef, Pork, Mutton, Lamb, Veal, Lard, Hams  
and Vegetables.

Under School House, Andover Street,  
BALLARD VALE, MASS.

Notice - Any person desiring to select nice Holmes, surrounded by grassy Platts, and by Waters that are never Ryley, after Raynor at any other time, but that Rolland tumble in their native purity between their Banks of Greene, and where the Finus of the tiniest fishes--though no Bigger than a Bean,--may be

discerned, no matter Howell they may try to conceal themselves. To all who Lovejoy and reJoyce in the beauties of nature, our village is open. Our Rhodes are good but Walkers may take their choice of them, or the Fields or Woods. The heart that could not Foster a love for such a place must be Blunt to all feeling. It matters not whether you are a Scott, or if Irish, or from Holland or Poland, or if your hands are Brown with toil, if you are a Maon and without Gile, we welcome you.

1875

### Did You Know?

That the Craighead and Kintz Co., besides making kerosene lamp fixtures, made beautiful bronze plaques and other decorative items before it was destroyed by fire on May 13, 1898.

CRAIGHEAD & KINTZ COMPANY.

CRAIGHEAD & KINTZ, BELLINGHAM, WASH. 22 BROAD ST. NEW YORK.



### Ballard Vale Advertisements

JOSEPH RUSSELL.

Dealer in

FISH, OYSTERS AND CLAMS,

Ballard Vale.

## "SHAWSHEEN."

Old stream of home, thy waters flow  
Through quiet vale and meadow;  
Across thy tide the breezes blow,  
And clouds make light and shadow;  
Through forest shade and grassy glade,  
And where the lilies blowing,  
Give to the air their fragrance rare,  
Thy peaceful waves are flowing.

I loiter on thy grassy bank,  
And hear the birds' sweet singing  
In the green rushes, tall and rank,  
Along thy brink upspringing;  
I trace the glimmer of thy wave,  
Through fields of grain and clover,  
To where thy peaceful waters leave  
The hills of Old Andover.

By grander streams my feet have strayed,  
By streams renowned in story;  
Have seen the Hudson's palisade  
In flash of sunset glory;  
Have seen thy waters dash and gleam,  
Thy rapids in commotion,  
St. Lawrence, by whose lordly stream  
The lakes flow to the ocean.

I've paced the lonely santly beat  
Along Potomac's side;  
After the march, in dust and heat,  
I have bathed in James' tide.  
Beside the banks of Rapidan  
Have lived in winter quarters;  
And crossed, in face of shot and shell,  
The Rappahannock's waters.

Somehow, no matter where I roam,  
However fair the scene,  
My thoughts go back to boyhood's home,  
And thy waters, dear Shawsheen;  
For me no grander river flows,  
And when earth's ties I sever,  
May I beside its waves repose,--  
Its peaceful waves,--forever.

T. F. WINTHROP.

1875

### OLD SCHOOL HOUSE ON THE HILL.

I'm treading on familiar ground,  
On soil endeared to me  
By many thoughts of bye gone days,  
Of youth and infancy.  
Old memories come crowding fast,  
And tears my eyelids fill,  
As I gaze upon thy ruined pile,  
Old schoolhouse on the hill.

Through Summer's heat I've climbed the hill,  
When roses were in blow,  
And trudged with merry, careless air,  
Through wintry sleet and snow.  
There Nora first inspired my heart  
With love's first sweetest thrill;  
Her memory is sacred.  
Old schoolhouse on the hill.

The wall-flower and the ivy green,  
Creep o'er thy walls to-day;  
Time's blighting hand has marked the spot;  
With tokens of decay.  
Where merry voices echoed once,  
All now is hushed and still;  
But thou art not alone in change.  
Old school house on the hill.

The youthful hearts that sat with me  
Upon thy rough hewn forms,  
Have perished as the flowers fade  
Before the Autumn storms.  
They sleep beneath the willows green,  
In the churchyard calm and still;  
Thou shalt echo nevermore their songs,  
Old schoolhouse on the hill.

T. F. W.

1867

Roy Haynes, U.S. Postmaster & Grocer, was unforgettable to many of us in the 1920's. My brother, Jack, always enjoyed the thrill of picking out a nickel's worth of penny candy from Roy and, just before the transaction was completed, he'd run for the door with me behind him. One day Roy threw an egg at him, missed, and splattered the store wall.

George Bruce, U.S. Postmaster & Grocer, took over ownership of Haynes' store in the late 1920's after serving his apprenticeship with Roy. George always had a way with kids. When he closed the store at 9:00 p.m., we would wait for him to say, "You don't have to go fellas, but you can't stay here! So-o-o, roll your hoops!" His store was always a fun place to visit; and his wife, May, never minded how many times we asked, "Is there any mail for us?" She helped make our days in the "Vale" pleasant. Gene Murnane, Dick Cooper, Dick Sherry, and Bob Greenwood served their apprenticeships at George Bruce's store.

Fred Buckley ran the store at Church & Andover Streets in the 1920's and sold out to Fred Wrigley in the late 20's. Fred Wrigley was killed in the early 1930's, and the store was sold to "the O'Briens." In the mid thirties, after a change in Washington politics, the post office was relocated to their store, and Richard E. O'Brien became the U.S. Postmaster. After Dick's untimely death, his wife, Beatrice Scott O'Brien, became our U.S. Postmistress until the office was placed under the Andover Postal Service in the 1960's.

The "Nation Wide Store" at the Boston & Maine Railroad crossing was owned and operated by our old friend, George Cheyne, with Bill Riley as his special assistant. George carried just about everything and lived by the old saying, "if we don't have

it—you don't need it!" George had several store helpers during his many years in the grocery business, including Ben Herrick, Tom Lynch, Jim O'Donnell, Frank Haggerty, Mike Mullaney, and John Duke. Bill Riley always said he had more than thirty years behind the wood (the counter), starting as a kid at his father's store, Poor & Riley Grocers, in the old "Bradlee Hall" at River and Andover Streets.

Fred Shattuck Sr. ran the little store at Tewksbury & Center Streets and in the late 1920's it was taken over by his son, Fred Jr. Gasoline for your "tin lizzie," if you were lucky enough to have one, was available and was hand pumped. Oil for the kitchen stove or for lamps was sold there, and it was a great stop for a can of soup, candy, or tutti-frutti ice cream. The speed of horses was quite often the main topic of conversation at Shattuck's. My father often told my old friend he late Arthur Ness and me, "If you boys knew your school lessons as well as the horses you'd be as smart as Steven Byington," the bard of Ballard Vale.

"Parker's On The Shawsheen" always fascinated us with its long marble soda fountain and ice cream tables and chairs. The canoe house and dance hall on the "Big River" topped it off. In the mid-thirties it was called "The Jack-O-Lantern Tea Room", but as the smoke of World War II was rising in Europe we were changing our ways and habits in small-town America. War came to us, and our little downtown businesses as we once knew them were gone forever.

Our old school house, community rooms, and library building fell victim to a political wrecking ball as the decade of the 80's approached. All of us had fond memories of our former town building that

offered us Boy Scout & Girl Scout rooms, minstrel shows, dance hall, bridge & whist parties, etc. Many of us had grandparents and great-grandparents who matriculated at the "Old School House," built long before the Civil War in the late 1840's.

Bradlee School, built in 1889, still stands today restored to its original grandeur by Frances P. Reilly. Old Bradlee still holds a lot of nostalgia for many of us in Ballard Vale. Our thoughts go back to our teachers, pleasant or otherwise, and to the Mother's Club of long ago and the Bradlee P.T.A. of more recent days. We consider ourselves fortunate to have gone to the "Old School," where we all knew each other.

In reminiscing, we must not forget our three houses of worship in the "Vale"; St. Joseph's Church, The Congregational Church, and The Methodist Church. The latter two merged in somewhat recent years to become The United Church. They enriched and influenced our lives, along with the Bradlee School, to give us the closely knit friendliness that was so prevalent in Ballard Vale in our time.

Today old friends and new will be greeting each other and sharing happy thoughts as we celebrate the 150th Anniversary of the naming of our little village, Ballard Vale.

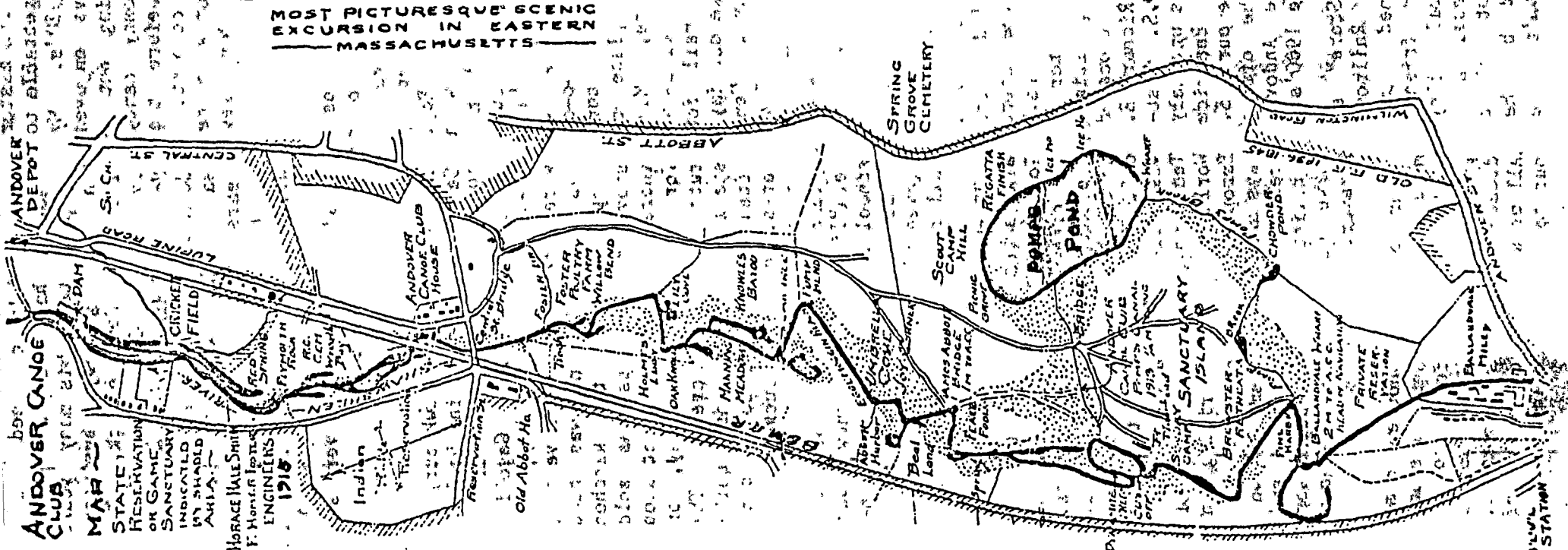
—Franklin K. Haggerty

### Did You Know?

That trains from Boston ran excursions to the Grove on the Shawsheen River in Ballard Vale.

Enigma Answer: Boston and Maine Railroad

**MOST PICTURESQUE SCENIC  
EXCURSION IN EASTERN  
~~MASSACHUSETTS~~**



The new motor yacht "Wm. Ballard" of the Ballard Line is built in a very unique manner, resting almost wholly on the surface of the river, requiring but ten inches of water when all of the thirty passengers are on board.

This excursion has been likened to that of the Oklawaha River of Florida and is one of the natural beauty spots of our Commonwealth.

The Andover Canoe Club Livery Canoes are built to a special design which is both safe and fast, being particularly adapted to our beautiful stream.

These Kennebec canoes may be rented at 50 cents for five hours any time except Sunday 2 to 5 and Holidays when triple rate is charged.

For the timid, we have an absolutely safe row boat.