



Another

advocated. Shortly thereafter Westfield enjoyed its first home-building boom, and it became apparent that money intelligently invested in public works returns handsome dividends to the taxpayers.

Commenting on this fact, a writer in the Union County Standard (Sept. 19, 1891) observes ironically: "The death of Robert M. Fairbairn recalls the good work that he attempted to do for this town and how he was defeated, twelve years ago, by the very

men who for the past five years have been trying to carry out the reforms which he proposed. . . . Mr. Fairbairn's opponents have spent their latter days trying to consolidate the road districts, to get better values out of road taxes and to learn how to build better roads. It (the delay) has cost the township a fearful lot of money."

Note: The "Telford Road" was made of crushed stone with a top dressing of gravel. Subsoil was sometimes used as a binder.



"Just An Interesting Experiment"

"Hello, Plainfield!" With this simple salutation, Westfield's first telephone switchboard was placed in use in the drug store of William Trenchard in 1900. The voice was that of his daughter Maud, who thereupon became the first operator. The instrument was lightly regarded, at the start—"just an interesting experiment". Instructions were to watch the board and complete what few calls were received. Within a month, however, the local subscribers had increased to fifty, and the establishment of a local telephone exchange was necessary. Miss Mabel Dolbier was the first operator to be regularly employed, followed soon after by the Layton sisters. Jake Wall, printer's devil extraordinary for a decade, served as night operator until the home folks decided it was a good thing to have a 'phone in the house in case the doctor was wanted in a hurry. Then, experts were required at the switchboard. Naturally, the efficient services of Florence Layton (Mrs. Fred Decker) were rewarded. In November, 1905, she was made chief operator. To mark the occasion she said: "Hello, everybody!" Now, turn time backward for a decade! The first telephone used in Westfield was a pay station, installed in Fred Decker's tailor shop, 173 Broad Street, in 1889. It was served out of the Plainfield office.

Birds of a Feather—

Married, Sunday afternoon, the twelfth instant, Mr. David Graybill to Miss Phoebe Bird. Now, they are flying high.

Young Bob Wins From Young Andy

Young Bob Fairbairn and Andy Smith had their first sleigh race of the season today. And Bob won. Andy drives George Young and Bob drives his father to the station, these winter mornings, and they race home. Dr. Cooper watched them from his office window and said that they came tearing up Broad Street neck-and-neck, but that Bob was on the inside and gained a length at the Mountain Avenue turn. Later, it was learned that he held the lead at the end. In admitting defeat, Young Andy said, "Sure, I'll beat Bob the next time, if I'm on the inside. On a straight-away, I think my horse would win. He's got a longer nose."—Dec., 1880.

Duck Shooting In Clark's Meadow

Charlie Courtney and Dominic Cadwell celebrated the opening day of the shooting season by bagging four quail, a woodcock and two ducks in the marsh back of Clark's Pond, Tuesday. Mountain Avenue pedestrians are warned to duck behind the nearest tree at the report of a gun, or risk being sprayed with buckshot.—November, 1889.

The Dominic's Marksmanship

Cy Wilcox says that the Dominic is a crack shot with a rifle. "Never knew him to miss. Can pick a penny off a post at fifty paces. Not so good with a gun, though. I fill my bag with the birds he misses."—November, 1892.