



The Town Pump and Trough

Every morning, winter or summer, at the precise moment of sunrise, the hostler at the Westfield Hotel, on Broad Street, would repair to the town pump, near the entrance drive, and clean out and fill the trough with fresh water. The natural spring which provided this water, had once formed a pool by the side of the road where the drivers of the stage coaches watered their horses while the passengers enjoyed a cherry flip and some home-cured ham.

Constable John M. C. Marsh, whose mother was an adopted daughter of John Miller, son of Azariah Clark, first known proprietor of The Tavern, said there had been a tree trough at that spot in the early days, made by the Indians, but when the first pump was set up, he did not know—certainly it was there when he was a boy in the 40's. When he built the hotel in '67, the old pump was in bad shape, so he had put in a new one.

"I've sobered many an old soak in that trough," explained the Constable, "and my grandfather said that Parson Woodruff used it for the same purpose. It had worked quicker than the stocks or the whipping post. In my boyhood they told a story about the stage driver from Spanktown (Rahway) whose favorite drink was 'Jersey Lightning'. He'd get tipsy and go to sleep in the coach. One summer evening, when the passengers returned from dinner at The Tavern, they found the old fellow curled up on the seat, snoring away. Unable to wake him, they dragged him forth, threw him into the trough and drove off with the coach."

The pump and watering trough remained old town institutions until the gas buggy came. Then they were replaced by a concrete roadway. But we may have need for the old pump again pretty soon—if ever we can find the horses.

1875

Excerpts From Westfield's First Newspaper

1875

Town Tidbits

The Westfield Division Sons of Temperance have been especially favored during the past month. On the evening of the 10th they had the pleasure of a visit from Grand Worthy Patriarch Rutan, and on the 17th Rev. Mr. McKelvey treated them to a fine and spirited address. Many thanks are due the Rev. gentleman for his kindness, and we hope the members of the Division will take advantage of some of the many good points made for them.

The A. M. F. Y. Church of Westfield will hold a Festival at Aeolian Hall, on the evening of the 3rd of June.

Plainfield Pencilings

They have a new fire alarm tower and bell in Plainfield, and last Wednesday afternoon they had a fire. Curious coincidence!

The "Town Clock" has been set in motion again after a brief rest, and, as an eccentricity of its kind, is the champion clock of the State. Large bets are continually made as to "what number of times it will strike next," and the chanticleers and servant girls both sides the Brook are in a chronic state of demoralization.

The last State Legislature granted a charter for a city railway in Plainfield.