

Cemetery Mystery Solved

By Pat Cutter

Andover Cemetery Trustees

James Gale Sr. moved to West Andover in 1815 and was listed in the 1850 census as a cabinetmaker and man of substance. He and his wife Roxanna (Currier) Gale had eight children, with six living in 1850. There are ten members of the Gale family buried in Andover's Old Center Cemetery.

In 1986, when the Andover Historical Society was cataloging stones in the cemetery, Barbara Upton and Kimball Elkins noted that the stone marking the grave of John Gale Jr. with only one line of inscription appeared to have additional text below the ground level.

Last winter this stone toppled. Restoration this summer revealed that in the past the stone had broken into four pieces and been set upright using the broken pieces as support.

The stone (pictured below) is now erect, supported by a backing of cement, and the inscription reads:



James Gale Jr.

Died

Sept. 22, 1857

In the 22, year

Of his age

“Cut down in blooming health

Care or sorrow came

By death's unyielding hand

On the N. Railroad Line

His brother engineers,

Conductors, firemen all

With sorrow mark the spot

Where their dear brother fell

??um no warning came

Death's Angel could not wait

But summoned him from earth

To pass the heavenly gate.”

Thanks to research by Kenneth Cushing of Grafton, the story comes to light, as published in the *New Hampshire Patriot and State Gazette* of September 23, 1857: “Fatal Accident – On Tuesday morning Mr. James Gale, a brakeman on the Northern freight train, was instantly killed near Sewall's Falls in this city [Concord]. It is supposed that in stepping from one car to another he fell between them upon the track...”

The brakeman's job on the railroad was the most dangerous. When James died there were no engine brakes, and the brakeman had to run on top from car to car to turn the wheels and set the brakes when signaled by the engineer.

On March 29, 1909 the name of the West Andover station on the now B&M Railroad line was changed to Gale. The change was required when there had been several accidents along the line because of confusion between villages whose name differed only by the prefix of East or West. Now all stations had to have their own names.

Can we suppose that the West Andover station was named for James Gale Jr.?

Andover Historical Society

By Margie Leber

Andover Historical Society

The museums in Potter Place are closed for the winter months, but that is not to say that nothing is happening. If you have passed the Emons Store recently you will notice that the window display changes with the season, thanks to the efforts of Kenneth Reid and Robert Hamilton. They have been responsible for adding to the overall general store atmosphere with clever displays of fascinating artifacts which would have been found in the store in past times.

During the 2007 season the gift shop will be relocated from the train station to the general store, heightening the feeling of a bustling business place. The space in the station vacated by the gift shop has been given a sprucing up and a coat of paint and will be used for the display of additional historical items.

The future of the Society's freight shed in Potter Place is very much at the forefront of interest. A Memorandum of Agreement with the Andover Lions Club for display of their Concord Coach has been signed by Historical Society president Pat Cutter and is expected to be signed by the Lions Club shortly.

In addition to the coach, the Society has accumulated many large pieces for which the freight shed is the perfect venue. We also have several potential donors with interesting, but large, items.

A committee is working to iden-

tify and plan for the changes needed to convert the freight shed into a fantastic exhibit hall. Some of the things being considered are lighting; the ability to convey large items, including the coach, in and out the building; safety concerns for visitors; historical integrity; and attractive display of objects.

The committee is working to generate grant money to further the development of the freight building. This will be a work in progress for some time.

The building is sturdy and serviceable and will lend another dimension to the Society's growing commitment to preserving the past for the future.



Andover Historical Society

Help Preserve Our Town's Proud Heritage!

Join the Historical Society and receive our quarterly newsletter.

Individual Membership – \$10
 Family Membership – \$15
 Donor Membership – \$50
 Individual Life Membership – \$150

Volunteers are always needed!

- Tend the museum in the summer
- Help care for Society properties
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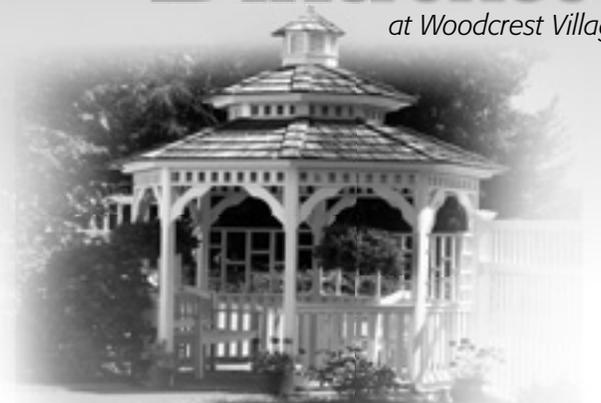


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