

News from the Stow Historical Society

A newsletter for all friends of Stow history.
Please feel free to pass it along to others who might be interested!

September 3, 2023

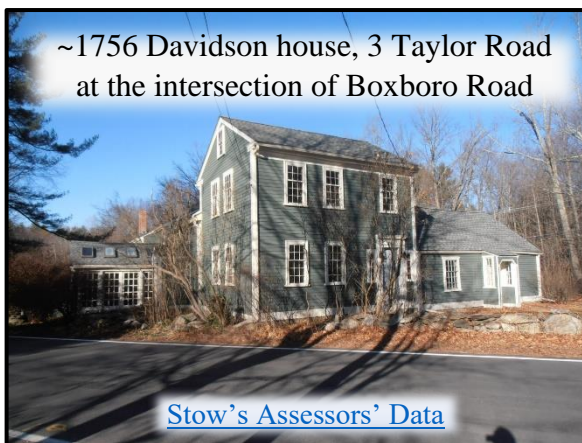
In this issue:

Meet two members of the Stow's Hale family born in the 19th century.

- Harriet Elizabeth Hale 1836-1920, daughter of **Silas Hale**, granddaughter of Charles Hale.
- Francis Wilbur Hale **1870-1946**, son of Joseph Hale, grandson of **Calvin Hale**.

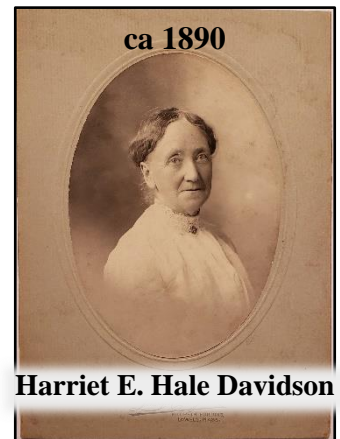
The Hale family name in Stow goes back many centuries to Gersom Heald, Concord, who took Lott 3 in the new Pompositicut Plantation in 1681.

Four years ago, as I reskimmed through the SHS archived photos in the town vault, I happened upon a Cabinet Card photo, labeled "My sister, **Harriet E. Davidson**" (Hale). I quickly took photos of the Cabinet Card. Here's a clue for future research. The future is here.



➤ It was Harriet's father, Silas, who sold the library lot to the town in 1892.

➤ A. G. R. Hale, a relative, was present at the dedication of the library on February 22, 1894. He "referred to the removal of the soldiers' tablets from the town hall to the library building. He traced the history of the Randall and Hale families



whose names are perpetuated in town by the Randall Library and the Hale High School." Crowell, *History of Stow*, " page 46.

- A. G. R. (Abraham Garland Randall) is Francis H. Hale's uncle.
- George H. Hale and his niece, Harriet, witnessed Silas Hale's will on March 15, 1882.

➤ **THEN this early spring:**

- The Chelmsford Historical Society contacted the SHS, inquiring whether the SHS was interested in Harriet Hale's 1854 wedding dress. Harriet and Jerome Davidson were married in Stow's First Parish church. How did the dress end up in Chelmsford? Ancestry.com research showed that the Davidsons had six children. The eldest, "Lizzie", 1856-1932, died in Chelmsford.

Harriet's black taffeta wedding dress has returned to Stow after 169 years. This fragile dress was featured at SpringFest on June 3rd and was much admired.



View the other half of the SpringFest display on page 5.



The 22"x18" framed collage of cyanotype prints was donated by a Davidson extended relative. It hung in the house for years. The photos were mounted with lace. Over the generations the descriptions and locations faded into the past.

These framed cyanotype prints ca 1900 came from the Davidson family home on Taylor Rd. It was donated by a great grandson who lives in New Hampshire.

Check out [cyanotype print](#)

The SunPrint Paper kits were available for children in the 1950s and can be purchased today. Check out Amazon.



Meet
**Francis Wilber Hale
and Family of Gleasondale**

Gleasondale's 1st Fire Chief



FATHER
Joseph Christmas
Hale of Stow
1830-1906



MOTHER
Ellen Stratton
of Bolton
1843-1936



1870



ca. 1880

F. W. [Frank] Hale

Gleasondale Fire Department

Gleasondale organized its fire department in 1909, keeping its equipment in the basement of Frank Hale's cider mill, convenient since he was the fire chief. His assistant was James Byron.

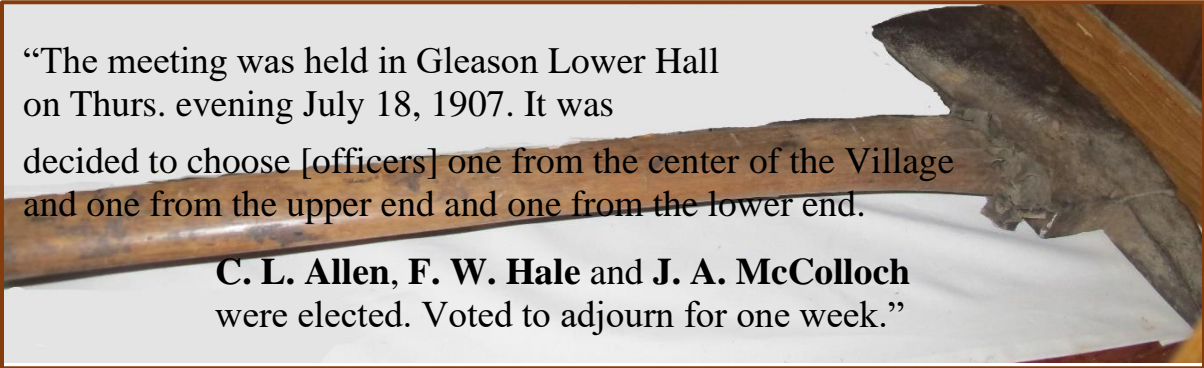
Some wells and springs were situated on hillsides and were therefore capable of delivering water through a pipe (which was sometimes wooden) to chosen locations. Running water, what a glorious convenience for people to have running water! Stow's public buildings were supplied with running water in 1907. At first the pump was driven by a windmill located beside the horse sheds at the Unitarian Church.

ORGANIZED JULY 25 1907

HUDSON DAILY SUN
HUDSON, MASS.

Another source for
the beginning of the
Gleasondale Fire
Department
1907
or
1909

“Following a disastrous fire in which a house and three barns were totally destroyed, a mass meeting of the citizens of the Village was called to take action on having a volunteer fire department.”



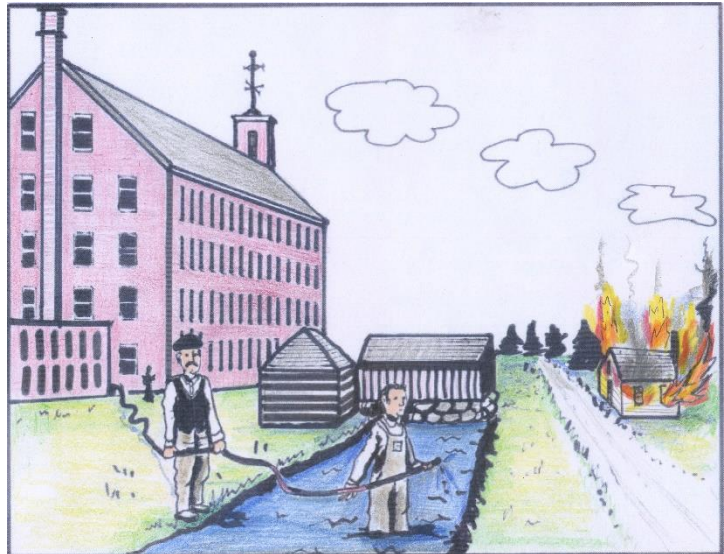
“The meeting was held in Gleason Lower Hall on Thurs. evening July 18, 1907. It was decided to choose [officers] one from the center of the Village and one from the upper end and one from the lower end.

C. L. Allen, F. W. Hale and J. A. McColloch were elected. Voted to adjourn for one week.”

Above is a fire axe, one of two fire axes which the Gleasondale Fire Department used. The fire axe is on display in the Whitney Historical Room, Randall Library.

Bill Byron’s memory of F. W. Hale:
“He was chief most, if not all the time. [As a young child] I remember seeing him in the front door of his house, big beard and all.”

On Tuesday afternoon, a fire that at first promised to be serious, broke out at about 4.30. The fire was seen from the finishing room of the mill, by Earle Parker, who gave the alarm. William Byron and William Brown seized the hose and waded across the river. They found the shed back of a vacant house ablaze, and the fire had spread to the house. While they were smashing in the doors of the house, others had dragged another length of hose around by the bridge; the two lengths were soon coupled and a stream of water turned on the burning buildings and the houses on both sides. The fire had gained considerable headway and it was necessary to chop holes in the roof to gain control. By 5.30, the fire was out and the excitement had died down. The house has not been occupied for some months. A combination of small boys, matches, and the rubbish left in the shed by the last tenant was the cause of the fire.



2020 Sketch of the 1919 fire

by R. Bawn

Celebrating Stow’s Women, 2021, by M. Zavorski, page 93

William Byron is Bill Byron’s father.

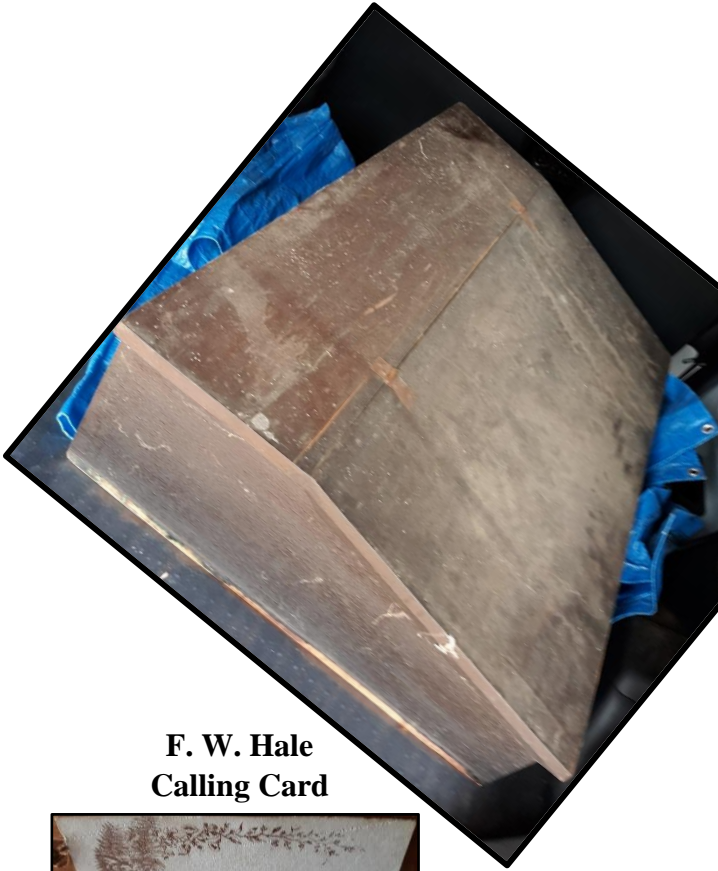
The SHS's Most Recent Donation

F.W. Hale's desk

42 inches long

28 inches deep

It was located on Randall Road in a home which is going to be demolished.



**F. W. Hale
Calling Card**



The **1880 Federal census** stated that the J. C. Hale family lived at the intersection of Sudbury and Gleasondale Roads with their red barn on the south side of Gleasondale. Going west, the neighbors of Joseph C. and Flora B [Cambridge] were:

Joseph C. Hale	50	Farmer	father was Deacon Calvin Hale
Abraham W. Forbush	58	Farmer	
Calvin Hale	80	Farmer	
Benjamin W. Hale	73	Woolen Manager	
A.G. R. Hale	45	Teacher	father was Deacon Calvin Hale
Augustus Rici	56	In shoe shop	
Charles W. Gleason	39	Woolen Manufacturer	

There is so much we do not know.

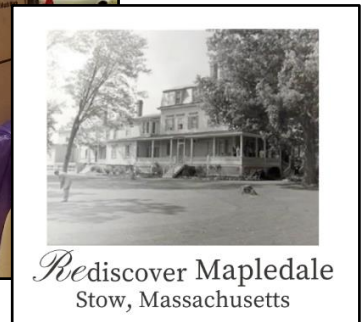
- How were the 3 fire captains alerted to a fire?
- How did the word spread? Bells? Shouting?

For the 1919 fire across from the mill, workers shouted and two who were nearest the ground levels grabbed hoses and dragged them across the river to the burning shed.

The other half of the SpringFest display



REDISCOVER MAPLEDALE



Yes, **Mapledale** has a storied history in our town. What used to be native American lands along the Assabet River was slowly settled after Stow received its charter in 1683.

Stephen Randall applied for a grant in 1685. And so began the Randall legacy in Stow. The land changed hands many times. In 1926 Black idealist Robert H. Hawkin, bought the former Randall house and land. Robert Hawkins realized his dream of purchasing private land to design and develop an African American golf club. This club could be the first in the United States. Today, it is Stow Acres Country Club. The club lasted just over three years due to financial hardship and the Depression. Yet, it left its mark on the golfing world.

ABOVE children and adults line up to play indoor miniature golf beside a poster board displaying the history of this legendary acreage. On the table lays a vintage golf bag with clubs, which was loaned to us by Dave Carlson, Stow Acres.



Our mission: Rediscover Mapledale seeks to preserve the historical significance of the Mapledale Country Club at Stow Acres Country Club.

Rediscover Mapledale Preservation Project has partnered with the Stow Historical Society, Freedom's Way National Heritage Area, Stow Conservation Trust, Nashoba Area Social Justice Alliance, and The Rotary Club of Nashoba Valley.

The committee has hired two consultants, Kathryn Harris and Douglas Stark, who have just published the book [*Interpreting Sports at Museums and Historic Sites*](#). Freedom's Way has given us a grant. It has been a busy spring and summer.

Volunteer Opportunities: Newsletter Help – Content and Mailing; Fundraising Help – PayPal or in-person events table; Events Help...

October 29th- "Stow Acres Master Planning Committee"- this committee has scheduled a public outing day on the Stow Acres North Course for Sunday October 29th – time TBD, but likely in the afternoon. Stow Acres has agreed to close the golf course, so this is an opportunity to get out and explore. We are thinking that we'll have a core of activities along the main cart path leading from the clubhouse. We will be planning some kid and family friendly activities, and have informational tables, tours, and opportunities to engage with residents about what they would like to see at Stow Acres. It's still some time away, but it seems like a great opportunity for Rediscover Mapledale to have a table and be there to talk with those participating. Please let us know if this might be of interest to you.

Social Media: Follow, Like, and Share!

[Facebook](#)
[Twitter/X](#)
[Instagram](#)

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Website: [Rediscover Mapledale](#)

This site includes two YouTube videos about Mapledale's history.

**The SHS extends tremendous appreciation
to the Chelmsford Historical Society,
the great grandson of Harriet Davidson Hale of NH, who donated
the framed collage of cyanotype prints,
to the Gleasondale family who shared the Hale family photos,
to the Stow family who donated Frank Hale's desk,
to Bill Byron of Stow for sharing his insights of Gleasondale and his
recollections of family stories,
and to Stow Acres Country Club for the loan of the vintage golf bag and
clubs.**

Come join us!



The SHS is seeking board members. It's all hands on deck!

Next month the SHS will feature the Stow Tavern, which stands today.

