

Summer in Boylston

A Peek into the Historical Society Photograph Archives

By Inga Milbauer

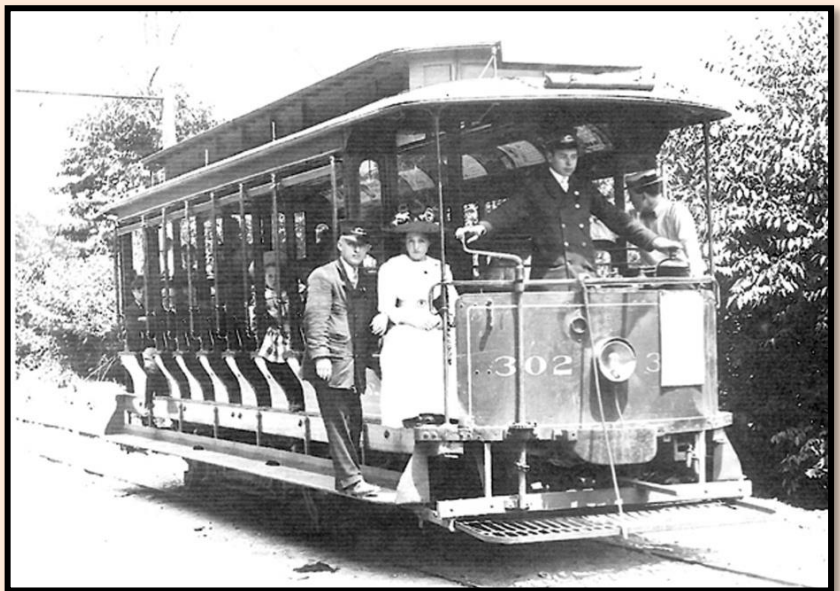
As the first days of June are upon us, summer is just a few weeks away. This year, the June solstice which marks the astronomical first day of summer in the Northern Hemisphere will take place on Wednesday June 21st. The following photographs from the archives of the Boylston Historical Society & Museum give an impression of past summers in the town of Boylston, Massachusetts.

Trolleys used to be a familiar sight in Boylston. The trolley line from Worcester Union Station to Clinton, Massachusetts followed what is now Route 70, with stops in Morningdale and Boylston Center, and continued to Leominster and Fitchburg. On December 10, 1898 the Worcester & Clinton Electric Street Railway was officially opened. It operated year-round; during the summer months, open trolley cars were used as seen in the photograph below. The driver is George Lambert “Burt” Hazard, Jr. of Boylston, Massachusetts. Burt, the son of George Hazard and Alice Flagg, was born in Boylston in 1886 and died in 1984 in Worcester, Massachusetts.

Open Trolley Car

Circa 1910

Photographer Unknown



The photograph below shows a view of the Center Store with Mobil gas pumps in the late 1930s. The “New Center Store” as it was called at the time, was owned by Harry A. Souci. The Center Store is now the Boylston Deli Café and Catering. The building adjacent to the store was the Red Barn Grain Bin Restaurant at that time.



**View of the Red Barn
Grain Bin Restaurant
& Center Store**

Late 1930s

Photographer Unknown

***Roses in front of the Red
Barn Grain Bin
Restaurant***

1940s

Photographer Unknown



Kate Souci Taylor bought the Boylston Center Store with the adjacent barn in the early 1930s from Frank B. Vinton, and ran the store together with her brother, Harry A. Souci.¹ Marian “Kate” Souci was born in Jordan, Onondaga County, New York on November 20, 1882. She was the daughter of George O. Souci and Sarah Campbell. She married George Henry Taylor on September 16, 1902 in Boylston, Massachusetts. Kate Souci Taylor decided to turn the grain bin barn into a restaurant. The Red Barn Grain Bin Restaurant opened in 1933. Since there was no heat in the barn, the restaurant was only open when the weather was warmer. It was open from noon to 8 pm. daily, except Mondays, and served about 45-50 people. In the summer months, patrons could also sit in the garden in the rear of the restaurant. Perhaps you remember sitting in these gardens enjoying your favorite food on a warm summer afternoon? The Red Barn Restaurant officially closed its doors during World War II. The building remained empty for many years before being dismantled in the 1950s.



***Garden in back of the Red
Barn Grain Bin Restaurant***

Date Unknown

Photographer Unknown

***Garden in back of the Red
Barn Grain Bin Restaurant***

Date Unknown

Photographer Unknown



Before the dam across the south branch of the Nashua River in Clinton, MA was built, this branch of the Nashua River meandered through the western section of the town of Boylston. The bridge at Sawyer’s Mills was one of two in town that crossed the Nashua River. The second bridge, Scar Bridge crossed the river a few miles south.² At the fork of the West Boylston and Sterling roads, the Nashua River provided a great place to go swimming. The spot where “the water was about ten feet deep at this point” was not far from the Scar Bridge.³ It was locally known as the Black Rock Swimming Hole; and “above Black Rock was the well-known ‘cold spring’ with water as cold as ice.”⁴



View of Nashua River from the Scar Bridge

Prior to 1900

Photographer Unknown

Another place to go swimming, according to the writings of George L. Wright, was the Sawyer's Mill Pond: at the Sawyer's Bridge "the water was always deep at this point".⁵

View of Sawyer's Mill Pond - Wachusett Reservoir

1895

Photographer Unknown



The final quintessential summer photograph featured is the field of corn on the "Elmwood Farm" (see below). The farm was owned by Montraville Flagg. In this photograph he is standing in the corn field. In the front are, from left to right, Richard A. Flagg, Alice Tilton, and Munson C. Flagg. They are proudly holding corn stalks of an impressive height. Montraville Flagg Jr. was born in Boylston on January 24, 1849. He was the son of Montraville Flagg and Parney P. Houghton. Montraville Flagg Jr. married Abbie Davis Flagg on November 17, 1870. Montraville Jr. died in Boylston, MA on August 25, 1910.⁶ His sons, Munson C. Flagg (1876-1955) and Richard A. Flagg (1881- 1973) would become owners of the farm in later years. Whether it be touring, dining, swimming, gardening, or farming, we at the Boylston Historical Society wish you much enjoyment this summer.



View of Elmwood Farm

Circa 1890

Photographer Unknown

Acknowledgements:

¹ Boylston Historical Society and Museum Potpourri email Vol. 2, No. 11 - 1 May 2001

² <https://www.boylstonhistory.org/images/sawyers%20mills%20beginning%20and%20end.pdf>

³ Boylston Historical Series by Bruce Filgate, 2012, p.13

⁴ Boylston Historical Series by Bruce Filgate, 2012, p.6

⁵ Boylston Historical Series by Bruce Filgate, 2012, p.6

⁶ <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/60848590/montraville-flagg>

<https://www.almanac.com/content/first-day-summer-summer-solstice>

<https://www.boylstonhistory.org/images/Red%20Barn%20Restaurant.pdf>

<https://www.boylstonhistory.org/images/Elmwood%20place.pdf>

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Boylston Historical Series by Bruce Filgate, 2012, Vol. I, Boylston Historical Society, Boylston, MA

Images of America Boylston by William O. Dupuis, 2000, Arcadia Publishing, Charleston, SC

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