

DEDICATION

A CENTURY IN THE LIFE OF THE HOLLIS TOWN HALL

December 1886

Here, at last, I stand on the eastern side of the Hollis Common after ten years of controversy and arguing. I'm proud of my position and of my looks!

Thanks to Levi Abbott my foundation is built on land where the Center District schoolhouse was located. At the dedication ceremonies today the Rev. Samuel L. Gerould agreed that the church, the schoolhouse and the town hall are the bulwarks of the Nation.

This has been a great day! Dozens of visitors came into town for the dignified and fitting ceremony. Of course they stayed for the sumptuous banquet, too, prepared by the Hollis women!

December 1986

Now I am one hundred years old, but far from decrepit and worn out! I still feel vigorous and undaunted. Oh I've had my face lifted more than once and my voice (added in 1902) has had periods of laryngitis, but I still sound the hourly reminders. Thankfully now, electricity has taken over much of the energy I once had to supply with heavy weights and hours of daylight.

What happiness I have experienced in providing space for town-wide events, i.e., celebrations; entertainments; social events; school parties and graduations; and Memorial Day observances. Basketball games of earlier days with fewer rules have made my second floor visibly tremble as grown men pounded across from basket to basket. Even the rhythmic steps of ballroom dancing made the boards sway – all the result of ingenuity used by the architect and contractor.

School classes have been held in the lower hall and churches have made use of both floors for worship services and fellowship suppers. Fraternal lodges and auxiliaries kept their rituals secret by use of proper shades in the lower windows.

I have been used for club meetings, exhibits, flea markets, not to mention political rallies; but I *will* mention them for Hollis has never held itself aloof from current issues of the day.

Today I'm excited about the relocation of more town offices here, and although I was glad to accommodate the Fire Department for a time, it is best to have a separate headquarters. Who could have foreseen such growth in a quiet, self-sufficient country town of the 18th century? It is a credit to the exceptional leadership in Hollis that through the years the rise and fall of population has been well managed. Even in the accelerated growth of the last decade most problems have been solved with restraint and understanding.

Since the Congregational Church burned in 1923 my tower dominates the horizon in all directions. Until then, the white steeple was the highest, and appropriately so. Perhaps it is significant now-a-days that I am the tallest, for who can judge what is most influential in Hollis?

In 1886 I was "dedicated to the citizens who labor amid obstacles and discouragements to advance the material, intellectual, and social interests of the town." I present the "proof that such efforts in the end shall not fail in their reward."

It's been a Great Century!

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