

GALE FORCE

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE FRIENDS OF GALE FREE LIBRARY FGFL.ORG

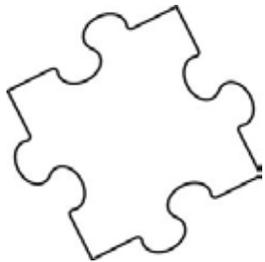
Gale Free Library: Opening doors for 130 years.

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Editor's note

Get with the Program

The Friends are proud to underwrite a number of library programs, which are free of charge. All you need to do is sign up with the Reference Librarian. For the schedule, stop by or call the Reference Desk, or check the Event Calendar on the library's website (www.galefreelibrary.org). Continuing and coming attractions include meditation classes, writing workshops, computer tutorials, ESL classes, cooking demonstrations, and a not-to-be-missed paranormal program for Halloween! And don't forget the Outdoor Summer Concert Series — no need to sign up for that, just show up!



Puzzle Place

Visitors to GFL's Reading Room may have noticed a lovely old oak table with an inviting jigsaw puzzle sitting on top — usually partially completed. Feel free to finish a section or even solve the whole thing. Then get a new puzzle from the Circulation Desk, which has about a dozen available to test your wits, patience, and spatial reasoning.



Striking Gold at GFL — or at Least Granite

BY RICHARD MAURER

FOUR HUNDRED million years ago, more or less, when a rogue mini-continent was bulldozing the Appalachian Mountains to Himalayan heights, molten rock deep underground rose through cracks in the crust and solidified as granite. In our region, a five-mile-wide belt of this ancient rock runs from Holden to Fitchburg. Gale Free Library owes much to these events, since our building (the Damon Memorial) has walls constructed largely of this local material.

It is very local, for the quarry that supplied the granite (pictured above) is less than a mile from the library, hidden in the woods at the end of an old cart road overgrown with saplings and mountain laurel. Not long ago, former FGFL treasurer Anthony Costello and your correspondent rediscovered the quarry. It was never really lost, but few people go there now, and even fewer realize that the hollow in

the hillside represents some 600 cubic yards of excavated stone that was carted to the building site of the Damon Memorial in 1887. (The structure was completed the following year.)

At that time New England was riddled with active quarries, supplying high-quality building stone to the eastern states. Stephen C. Earle, the Damon Memorial's architect, could easily have specified the gorgeous rose granite that he had picked for Princeton's Goodnow Memorial, which went up a few years before our building. That stone comes from Milford, Massachusetts, and was used for the American Museum of Natural History in New York City (1869) and later for the Boston Public Library (1895), Worcester City Hall (1898), and many other notable structures.

However, Earle had different instructions

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Bird's-eye view of Holden in 1892. John B. Dodd's quarry is at the spot marked ① off Kendall Road, which, contrary to the map, continues toward Paxton. The Damon Memorial is marked ②.



Granite block at Dodd's quarry. Just above ③ are three shallow drill holes. Metal wedges and side pieces called feathers were inserted into these holes and then hammered to split the block.

for his Holden project. The Damon Memorial's benefactor, Samuel C. Gale, wanted the materials and labor to be obtained as much as possible from the town itself. Accordingly, local craftsmen were hired, and the contractor chosen for the stonework, Thomas Hennessey, must have recommended his nearby source of granite slabs: the quarry of John B. Dodd on Kendall Road. Dodd had married into the Kendall family, who owned much of the land in that part of Holden. His quarry was small, and the Damon Memorial was surely the biggest job he ever had since the granite has a distinctive mix of minerals that this reporter has spotted in only one other building in the area: Howe Memorial Chapel in Grove Cemetery, built in 1925. Aside from the chapel, the granite appears in various foundations and stone walls around town.

But Dodd saw other business opportunities for his rock pit. The July 28, 1888 issue of *Wade's Fibre and Fabric* has a short write-up on the Damon Memorial, noting that it is being built "of native granite, from the quarry of John B. Dodd." The article goes on: "During the quarrying of the stone, the workmen found a vein of gold-bearing quartz. Mr. Dodd has had the opinion of experienced engineers who give it as their verdict 'that it is a rich find.' All that is now required for its successful development is capital; and Mr. Dodd would be pleased to hear from anyone wishing to engage in such an enterprise."

Is there gold in the Damon Memorial? Chuck Skillings of the Holden Historical Society

did a little digging and found that Dodd took out a mortgage on his property in 1888, possibly to finance the gold venture. In any event, there was no Holden gold rush, and in 1897 Dodd's brother-in-law Edward Kendall paid off the mortgage and acquired title to the land. A few decades later, the Lundquist family purchased the property along with adjoining parcels, and in the early part of this century the land with the quarry was given to the current owner, the Massachusetts Audubon Society.

Gold was much on people's minds in the late nineteenth century. In 1888 the South Africa gold rush was in the news, and the California gold rush was only a generation in the past. *The History of Worcester County, Massachusetts*, published in 1889, records that gold fever had struck other towns. In Uxbridge, the history reported, "it is believed by some that the yellow-colored quartz, which is found in quite large quantities in the western part of this town and the adjoining part of Douglas, contains gold, but if they will take pains to weigh it they will find its specific gravity insufficient to indicate the presence of gold."

The town of Dudley, the book continued, was similarly affected: "Like many other towns in Eastern Massachusetts, the rocky formation is chiefly granite, quartz rock and gneiss. . . . This rock often contains iron pyrites, mica, lead, tin and some other mineral substances in small quantities. The glitter of the little particles has led to the belief that gold and silver might be found in this town, and, in common with many others in the State, it has had its

excitements over wild and fruitless searches for the precious metals.”

Which brings us to the rust stains on our library’s walls. From a distance, the arrangement of stones creates a *mélange* of warm colors: gray, black, milky white, pink, and orange. The gray is quartz, the black flecks are likely biotite, the white and pink are feldspar, and the large patches of orange are iron oxide — rust. A freshly cut piece of our granite sparkles with iron-containing minerals, possibly pyrite or mica. Over time, these oxidize into rust, but Dodd’s consultants may have mistaken them for gold. The rust also explains why granite like ours is not widely used in buildings, since rust is considered a blemish; granite without iron-containing minerals is much preferred.

In the Damon Memorial, Earle and Hennessey have used this “flaw” to beautiful effect. The stones are rough-cut in irregular shapes and sizes, and arranged in a random-looking pattern. They are set off by reddish-brown sandstone quarried from East Longmeadow, Massachusetts, which is used for the sills, lintels, arches, and other architectural details to create a border for the craggy, mottled blocks from Dodd’s quarry.

The Damon Memorial’s granite edifice is a perfect analogue to the classic New England stone wall — rough-and-ready, utilitarian, monumental. And like the venerable wall it will last for many generations. Who knows? Maybe even another 400 million years.



Damon Memorial
Clock Tower

Check Your Work!

In the last issue we ran questions from the Holden High School entrance exam for 1888. Below are the answers, based on information available to students at that time.

1. Define Horizon: “That circle upon which the earth and sky appear to meet.” (*Harper’s School Geography*, 1880)

— **What causes the change in seasons?** “The change of seasons is due to differences in the directions of the sun’s rays, which beat almost directly on our heads in midsummer, and fall very obliquely in midwinter.” (*The Earth in Space: A Manual of Astronomical Geography*, 1887)

2. Upon what three conditions does climate depend? “Climate depends upon distance from the Equator, elevation above the sea level, the prevailing winds and ocean currents, and distance from the sea.” (*Harper’s School Geography*, 1880)

— **Is the sun nearer the earth in the summer or in the winter?** “Strange as we may think it, [the sun] is nearer to us . . . in mid-winter than at mid-summer; this, however, only holds for the N. half of the globe.” (*Sun: A Familiar Description of His Phaenomena*, 1885)

3. How would you go by water from St. Louis to Chicago? The most direct route is up the Mississippi and Illinois rivers, through the Illinois and Michigan Canal, to Chicago. “Canals connect the rivers flowing into the Great Lakes with navigable branches of the Mississippi and the Ohio . . . [including] the Illinois with the Chicago [rivers].” (*Harper’s School Geography*, 1880)

4. In what continent are the highest mountains found? Asia. “The Himalaya Mountains . . . are the highest in the world.” (*Harper’s School Geography*, 1880)

— **Take a cargo of goods from Boston, Mass., to Rio Janeiro. Of what would the cargo probably consist?** “dry goods, clothing, boots and shoes” (*Dictionary . . . of Commerce and Commercial Navigation*, 1877)

— **What might be the return cargo?** “cotton, sugar, and caoutchouc” (*Dictionary . . . of Commerce and Commercial Navigation*, 1877)

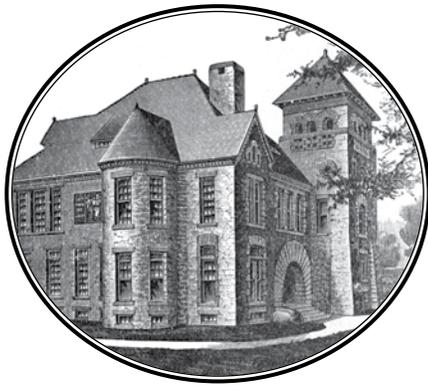
5. Correct as to capitals and punctuation: mary will not lend me Her new bible said fannie because she says that Mothers old one is good enough for a little girl. “Mary will not lend me her new Bible,” said Fannie, “because she says that Mother’s old one is good enough for a little girl.”

6. Write a sentence containing an attribute complement (predicate nominative or predicate adjective); Example: Grover Cleveland is President of the United States [predicate nominative].

. . . an object complement (direct object). Example: Benjamin Harrison defeated Grover Cleveland [direct object] in the election of 1888.

7. Write from memory a stanza of poetry, attending carefully to capitals and punctuation. Example: Listen, my children, and you shall hear / Of the midnight ride of Paul Revere, / On the eighteenth of April, in Seventy-Five: / Hardly a man is now alive / Who remembers that famous day and year.

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The Case of the Missing Book Case

THIS 1999 PORTRAIT of then-GFL Director Janet Baker was taken by local photographer Zabelle D'Amico. Zabelle remembers asking for a prop to make Janet's pose more natural. Janet retreated to a nearby office and wheeled out the revolving bookcase that you see next to her in this image. It was perfect! Dating from around 1900, the bookcase had been at GFL for generations. After the photo shoot, Janet returned it to its customary place and at some point — a year or two or three later — it vanished; no one recalls precisely when. One day in the early 2000s, Janet asked her successor, Jane Dutton, "Whatever happened to that antique revolving bookcase?" It was then that they realized it was lost. This photo is its last recorded sighting. Do any of our readers have memories of it or clues to its whereabouts?



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Check Your Work! *continued from page 3*

8. Correct: He is not here, I don't think.

I don't think he's here.

— **Will I get your book for you?**

May I get your book for you?

— **I seen him do it.** I saw him do it.

— **Can I borrow a book?**

May I borrow a book?

— **You hadn't ought to go.**

You shouldn't have gone.

9. Divide thirty-three thousandths by 100; thirty-three hundred thousandths

... by 10; thirty-three ten thousandths

... by 5; sixty-six ten thousandths

... by .005. 6.6

10. From 4 subtract one thousand one hundred thirteen hundred millionths.

Three and 99,998,887 hundred millionths

11. A man bought a horse for \$250, and sold it for 12 ½% more than he gave for it; required the gain and the selling price.

Gain: \$31.25. Selling price: \$281.25

12. $6\frac{4}{27} - (2\frac{1}{3} \div 7\frac{1}{5}) = \text{what?}$ $5\frac{89}{108}$



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