

## Clippings From Old Newspapers

From the *Winsted Herald* (a weekly paper that came out on Fridays):

Angels or Demons – Twenty or more tramps applied to selectman Simons for food and shelter during the month of January. One can hardly be “forgetful to entertain strangers” nowadays, so frequently does the opportunity present, but whether any have “thereby entertained angels unawares” the universal absence of wings and the general forbidding exterior of the objects make the fact extremely improbable.

*Colebrook, February 8, 1878*

Come and Dig Me Out – Winter has finally asserted its rights. The driving storm of last Thursday and Thursday night blocked our streets for the first time and road breaking on Friday was the order of the day. Here was a chance to try the new road breaking system and test the size and strength of the town exchequer. But for the general spirit of our citizens be it said that for the most part men went to work with a will and in less time than it would have taken to have notified our selectmen and awaited their motion, the main thoroughfares of the town were all broken out and open to travel. But an occasional lamentable exception to this commendable spirit and action is mentioned. Some half dozen men living here and there, who pay the least taxes, transact the least business and consequently use the roads the least, lost no time in besieging and beseeching the selectmen to come and dig them out. “Dig yourselves out,” they replied. “you are better able to do it yourselves than the town to do it for you.” Cold comfort that! Yet who can doubt the wisdom?

*Winsted Herald, Feb. 8, 1878*

Had His Lesson – A bright little fellow in the infant class on a recent Sunday commenced at the first question and recited the entire lesson by rote, questions and all, and then turning exultingly to the class exclaimed: “There, I’ll bet there ain’t one of you can do that, now can you?”

*Winsted Herald, Nov. 1, 1878*

We have a fellow in our employ, Northway by name, who smoked and chewed to excess and had done so for years, and the habit was so strong that he wasn’t easy a minute without a cigar or a “chew” in his mouth, who broke off suddenly and for certain some time last March, and hasn’t chewed nor smoked since. Now we know nothing of the habit from experience, but from what we have been told, we judge that if a person can break off from [a habit] so strong as this is claimed to be and not take it up again for six months, there is some hope for him, and it will do for him to boast a little. By the way, the young man in question keeps an album [an autograph book, common during the latter part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century] and we suspect the following sentiment inscribed therein by a lady friend had something to do in the matter. We append the lines that some other young lady may give her lover or gentleman friend, who is disposed to make a smoke stack of his face or a cesspool of his mouth, a similar jog:

“May never lady press his lips,  
His proffered love returning,  
Who makes a furnace of his mouth

And keeps its chimney burning.  
May each true woman shun his sight,  
For fear his fumes might choke her  
And only those who smoke themselves  
Have kisses for a smoker.

*Winsted Herald, Aug. 22, 1879*

(Robertsville) Mr. Alvin Hall has again taken to himself a wife. On account of the rain Sunday and Monday nights, he supposed he had escaped a serenade, but Tuesday evening there was quite a little company gathered around his house with various instruments, dinner horns, tin pans, etc. The music was loud and shrill but the newly married couple did not respond to the music in any way, yet I hardly think their slumber was undisturbed. Like truehearted Yankees, the serenaders persevered in their attempts to arouse the hosts and hostess (until the small hours of the night) but they seemed contrary minded.

*Winsted Herald, Aug. 22, 1879*

Since our tobacco item last week – and by the way, our “right hand man” came near shouldering his pack because we “told tales out of school” and, he says, (and sticks to it) that he broke off using tobacco before that “gal” ever thought of writing in his album! Anyway, since last week, a boy has been visiting hereabouts that skunks (not a bad word in this case) any old tobacco chewer we ever met. He was 12 years old, had chewed a year, and learned in New York, he said. “Could stop if he wanted to, but didn’t want to.” Tried it [to quit] once, and was sicker’n thunder.” All he complains of now is the price of tobacco. Says he could buy it in New York for 25 cents a pound, and thinks the price charged around here “outrageous.” He carries his tobacco in a tin matchbox. Next!

*The following 6 items come from the Sept. 14 1883 Winsted Herald:*

“A New Hampshire graveyard contains a tombstone erected to the memory of ‘three twins.’”

“An Ohio blacksmith shop has a sign ‘Men wanted, to shoo horses.’ Some woman who has had experience with hens could fill the bill.”

“ ‘Boy,’ said a gentleman to a disobedient youth whom he encountered, ‘don’t you hear your father calling?’ ‘Oh, yes’, replied the boy; ‘but I don’t mind nothin’ he says, an’ mother don’t neither; and a twixt her an’ me we about got the dog so he don’t too.’”

“On a post erected by the surveyors of the Kent road in England, there appears the following: ‘This is the bridle path to Faversham. If you can’t read what is here written, you had better keep to the main road.’”

“A man who paid a plumber \$5.00 for putting water on every floor of his house, said when the kitchen chimney caught fire, the engine company did the same job without charging him a cent!”

“The coal man’s cart broke down as he was going to weigh the coal. ‘You needn’t fuss to weigh that coal’ said the man who had purchased it. ‘If it’s heavy enough to break down the cart, it weighs more than any ton of coal I ever got before. I’m satisfied!’”