A Walking Tour of Carriage Hill

by

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Amesbury Carriage Museum
Amesbury, MA

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Our tour today explores downtown buildings that were the location of carriage factories and later shops converted for the making of automobile bodies. Away from the river, these factories used hand-powered machines or steam-powered machinery in larger plants.

Over the years these businesses and their workers endured many challenges including the “Carriage Hill fire” of April 5, 1888, a year of mass-rebuilding, the financial crash of 1892-3, and then the ensuing depression. Recovery was hampered by the emerging dominance of carriage making centers in the Midwest, and then the gradual decline of Amesbury’s carriage industry after the turn of the century.

In Amesbury, there were many short-lived partnerships as owners sought new business opportunities beyond making carriages, and shifted from the use of wood to metal for auto body construction. In addition, small companies merged into larger firms that eventually dominated the local economy. The great depression of 1929 drove Amesbury’s auto body industry into total and permanent decline when Midwestern automobile companies transferred all body-building operations to their centralized factories.

The following map and catalog descriptions provide a brief summary of the businesses that operated at each location.
A Walking Tour of Carriage Hill

City Street Department garage, formerly Amesbury Brass & Foundry Co. div. of Biddle & Smart, carriage & auto body maker. 1906

Amesbury & Salisbury Gas Light Co. 1887-1920s. Coal gasification plant & source of current EPA cleanup

Remnant of Seth Clerk Jr. carriage complex 1866-1904, now Drew's Tire

Mill #17, textile power plant built 1871. Main portion used for Charles Wing hardware, major purveyor of hardware to carriage & auto body makers.

Mill #4, textiles, built 1854 later used for auto bodies, shoes, now general business condos


Walker & Nelson, makers of carriage varnish & paint, 1874-ca.1890. Currently Noshery restaurant

RR Depot, moved to this location 1886-7

Brick bottom. Foster Gale & other carriage makers 1866-1904. Auto related shops 1904-1930

Colchester Mill Co. – textiles 1866-ca.1875. Leased to carriage & auto body makers afterward. Only steam engine house remains

First location of current RR depot, built in late-1870s to replace original 1848 depot on Water St. at end of tracks

Biddle & Smart office building & garage, 1920s. Current LaBaron Bonney automobile restoration

John Shiels 1900-1920. Auto body painting & trimming. Foundation appears to remain at east end of Lincoln Canoe & Kayak

Note: Tour buildings, numbered ②. Details on pages 3-5.

Descriptions of other visible architectural features of former Amesbury industries.

City garage & original depot location lack remnants.
Biddle & Smart, carriages, sleighs, & auto bodies
Built 1876 for carriage body making
29 Water St

One of several buildings built 1876-7 by William Biddle, after fire destroyed his original shop. Biddle joined with William Smart in 1880 to become Biddle & Smart, and they subsequently expanded to numerous buildings on Water Street. Their company committed heavily to auto body making in 1906, building the foundry next door that later became the city street department garage.

Charles W. Long, carriage makers
Built up 1865-1875 for carriage making
5 Ring St.

The complex began with Daniel Bailey carriages, then at the rear of 42 Elm Street, and grew ca. 1876 under George Hunt carriage maker. Hunt seemingly retired and the complex was taken over in 1884 by Charles W. Long, a carriage maker who relocated from a smaller shop on Clark Street. Mr. Long later expanded to include a building across Back River, connected by foot bridge. After a 1905 fire, the building across the river was sold, and the remaining Ring St. building was used for stables & storage. It is now the Barn restaurant.

### Table 1: Carriage and Body Manufacturing Companies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Company</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Business</th>
<th>Year Estab.</th>
<th>Year Ended</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Osgood, Enoch W. &amp; Isaac</td>
<td>carriages</td>
<td>carriage gears &amp; parts, sets</td>
<td>1876</td>
<td>1880</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biddle, Wm. E.</td>
<td>carriages</td>
<td>carriage gears &amp; parts, sets</td>
<td>1878</td>
<td>1880</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biddle &amp; Smart &amp; Co.</td>
<td>carr. &amp; sleighs</td>
<td>carriages, bodies, &amp; gear</td>
<td>1880</td>
<td>1906</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bailey Company Inc. (The)</td>
<td>auto</td>
<td>carriages, hardware, trimmings &amp; mouldings</td>
<td>1906</td>
<td>1930</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Day, William H.</td>
<td>files</td>
<td>files &amp; mill bastards</td>
<td>1884</td>
<td>1889</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poyen, John S. Jr. &amp; Co.</td>
<td>carr.</td>
<td>carriage hardware, trimmings &amp; mouldings</td>
<td>1884</td>
<td>1896</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lewis, Benj. F.</td>
<td>carr.</td>
<td>carriages, hardware, springs</td>
<td>ca. 1887</td>
<td>ca. 1895</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clarkison Joseph T. &amp; Co.</td>
<td>carr.</td>
<td>ca. 1896</td>
<td>ca. 1896</td>
<td>1906</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lockwood &amp; Brown</td>
<td>carr.</td>
<td>ca. 1899</td>
<td>ca. 1907</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walker &amp; Wells</td>
<td>auto</td>
<td>1909</td>
<td>1911</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pettingell Machine Co. - Pettingell</td>
<td>auto</td>
<td>machinery, body parts, metal bodies</td>
<td>1913</td>
<td>1950</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biddle, Smart &amp; Co.</td>
<td>auto</td>
<td>auto bodies for Winton auto</td>
<td>1915</td>
<td>1916</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clark Body Co.</td>
<td>auto</td>
<td>Buick completion &amp; assy to chassis</td>
<td>ca. 1916</td>
<td>ca. 1918</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bailey Company Inc. (The)</td>
<td>auto</td>
<td>felt lined window channels &amp; mouldings</td>
<td>1950</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

John Poyen, carriage hardware
Built 1884 as commercial rental space
77 Elm St.

Built by the Colchester Mill Co., 1884, and leased to John S. Poyen, major purveyor of hardware for carriage makers, 1884-1896. William Day was in a small extension in the back. It was next occupied by J. T. Clarkson carriages. Lockwood & Brown were on the top floor, which was reportedly once a skating rink. Pettingell Machine Co. then began making auto bodies and perhaps machinery there, spawning the related Bella Body Co. The Bailey Co. used the building mid-century as part of their sprawling business making felt-lined channels for automobile door sliding windows.

S.R. Bailey & Currier Cameron & Co., carriage & auto body making
Built 1882 as commercial rental space
79 Elm St

Built by the Colchester Mill Co., 1882. First Amesbury home of S. R. Bailey (from Maine), maker of carriages & sleighs. Currier Cameron & Co. then occupied it, with Bailey, also making carriages. C. C. & Co. later began making auto bodies for Duryea, Stanley, & Locomobile, producing a majority of the Stanley steamer bodies. C. C. & Co. failed after Stanley went bankrupt & defaulted on debts.
Hollander & A.N. Parry, carriage & auto body making
Built 1888
1 Oakland St.

Built after the 1888 carriage hill fire. Housed a series of carriage makers, including A. N. Parry, who had occupied the previous building on the site. The Hollanders then shifted to auto body manufacture. Walker Body Co. eventually used this and a group other buildings along Oakland St. as they expanded after 1918, when H. H. Franklin Car Co. took a financial interest in the firm. Walker went under in 1931, when the Franklin Co., of Syracuse, N. Y. failed. A. N. Parry had since gone into selling carriage hardware and findings, when J. Poyen retired from that line, and continued for years with auto body hardware in one of the D. J. Folger side buildings on Oakland Street. That business was continued until mid-century by one of the Hollander family sons.

John H. Clark, carriage makers, & later auto body makers
Built 1888
9 Oakland St.

Built after the 1888 carriage hill fire. This originally housed John H. Clark, a carriage maker on the street before the fire, whose name can still be read on the building. The expanding Walker Body Co. was here, in total occupying buildings 5, 6, 7, and 8 of the tour. After Walker failed, Doman & Marks were here for several years, producing a line of air cooled truck and aircraft engines. They had come from Walker’s patron, Franklin Car Co., and eventually moved their company back to the old Franklin factory in Syracuse.

Hume Carriage Co., carriages, & The Atlantic Co., boats
Built 1888
11 Chestnut St.

Built after the 1888 carriage hill fire. Originally the Hume Carriage Co. of James & William Hume, replacing William Hume’s complex from before the fire. The building became part of The Atlantic Co., builder of boats & motors that took over buildings 7, 8, & 9 of the tour. At one point, the Murphy Co. claimed to be the largest existing company in its field, making fasteners for trimming auto body interiors.

David J. Folger, Drummond & Son, carriage makers
Built 1876
12 Oakland St.

One of the few survivors of the 1888 carriage hill fire, which did not cross Morrill Street. Originally housed William Smart, who later merged into Biddle & Smart. David Folger then occupied the site, whose name can still be read on the building. Around the end of 1887, he and James Drummond merged into a new building down on Railroad Ave., while Drummond (Robert) & Taylor took over this building, just in time for the fire. (The Folger brothers, David & Nathanial, were from Nantucket, thus certainly being related to the coffee family.) A shoe manufacturer was here during the WWI era, shoes becoming a somewhat prominent Amesbury business during mid-century, after the demise of auto related work.

### Company
### Category
### Business
### Year Estab.
### Year Ended

**Hollander, Frank & Co.**
carriages
1889

**Hollander, Lambert**
carriages heavy carriages
1889 1909

**Marden, Geo. W. & Co.**
carriages light carriages
1889 ca. 1893

**Parry, August N. & Co.**
carriages
1889 1895

**Parry, August N.**
carr. hardware carr. & auto hardware & findings
1895 1907

**Hollander, Lambert**
auto taxi auto bodies
1907 1909

**Hollander, George H. & Morris**
auto bodies for Cadillac & private contract
1909 1917

**Amesbury Body Co.**
auto body auto
ca. 1917 1918

**Walker Body Co.**
auto auto bodies stamped panels & parts
1918 1931

**Hume Carriage Co.**
carriages Messr’s Walker & Sheils, with Jas. Hume
1888 1909

**Walker & Sheils**
carriages rebuilt after fire
1888 1909

**Hume Carriage Co.**
auto bodies for Grout auto
1909 1919

**The Atlantic Co.**
boats boats, dories, motors
ca. 1905 ca. 1915

**Clark Body Co.**
auto Buick completion & assy to chassis
ca. 1915 1916

**Murphy, G. W. J.**
auto curtain & trimming fasteners for auto tops
1916 1927

**Walker Body Co.**
auto auto bodies stamped panels & parts
1927 1931

**Smart, William E.**
carriages
1876 1880

**Folger, David J.**
carriages formerly with C.W. Patten
1881 1887

**Drummond (Robert Jr.), Taylor**
carriages fine carriages, survived fire of 1888
1888 1889

**Drummond, R. & Son**
carr. & sleights fine carriages
1889 1894

**Palmer, Chas. H.**
carriages
1894 1897

**Connor, Patrick H. Carriage Co.**
carriages & wagons
ca. 1897 1906

**The Atlantic Co.**
boats boats, dories, motors
ca. 1905 ca. 1915

**H. C. Rowe Shoe Co.**
shoes
ca. 1916 ca. 1920

**Walker Body Co.**
auto auto bodies stamped panels & parts
ca. 1920 1931

**Clark, John H. & Co.**
carr. & sleighs
1888 1910

**Clark Carriage Co.**
auto
1904 1910

**Amesbury Body Co.**
auto auto bodies
ca. 1917

**Walker Body Co.**
auto auto bodies stamped panels & parts
1916 1931

**Doman, Karl & Marks, Edward**
auto air cooled auto & airplane engines
1903 1906

A Walking Tour of Carriage Hill
Osgood Morrill. carriages, & The Atlantic Co. boats 
Built 1877
8 Morrill St.

The other significant survivor of the 1888 fire. This was a complex of wood buildings, including a 2 1/2 story carriage repository. The 3 1/2 story main manufacturing building appears to partially survive as the front office of Teke furniture restoration. After The Atlantic Co. ceased operations, around 1915, this property was used for several years to store their residue. Thereafter, the complex seems to have been empty, and/or used for general storage up into the 1960s.

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<th>Year Estab.</th>
<th>Year Ended</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gale, Dudley E. &amp; Morrill, Osgood</td>
<td>carriages</td>
<td>1877</td>
<td>1884</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morrill, Osgood Carriage Co.</td>
<td>carriages</td>
<td>1885</td>
<td>1906</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wells, Harlan P. &amp; Morrill, Osgood</td>
<td>carriages</td>
<td>1890</td>
<td>1900</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Woodward, W. R.</td>
<td>carriages</td>
<td>bodies &amp; dash stitching</td>
<td>ca. 1895</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Atlantic Co.</td>
<td>boats</td>
<td>boats, dories, motors</td>
<td>ca. 1905</td>
<td>ca. 1918</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

John Shiels auto bodies, & Frank Hoyt peanut products 
Built 1890
11 Oakland

Built after the 1888 carriage hill fire, which spread further down this side of Oakland. Originally housed Eben Currier, who seemed to own considerable land along the street. John Shiels used this for some auto body building, but primarily for body painting and interior trimming. Frank Hoyt then purchased the building for his growing business of peanut butter & other peanut products, which had started in the carriage house behind his home. He flourished here for decades, and with rail access directly behind the plant, dispatched numerous “peanut trains” out of Amesbury.

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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Currier, Eben M.</td>
<td>carriages</td>
<td>1890</td>
<td>ca. 1898</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shiels Carriage Co.</td>
<td>auto</td>
<td>bodies for Stanley &amp; Buick</td>
<td>1898</td>
<td>1918</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hoyt, Frank M. &amp; Co.</td>
<td>peanut butter</td>
<td>Buffalo brand products</td>
<td>ca. 1918</td>
<td>1960s</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

With continued success, Hoyt added this second, attached building to his Buffalo Brand peanut business, sometime during the 1920s.
Lithographic view, David J. Folger carriage complex at 12 & 14 Oakland Street & Morrill, published 1884. The brick buildings on left remain today as part of the Chestnut Innovation Center. The buildings on right were originally used as blacksmith shops. In 1907, the A. N. Parry carriage hardware and finding business occupied the site, later selling auto-related hardware. These buildings are no longer standing.
Only known illustrations of the Osgood Morrill carriage complex, a group of wood buildings extending across the block, behind the D. J. Folger buildings.