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Town service is recalled by ex-selectman

Hartshorn market and on Hartshorn's farm. He also kept his own cows, horses and chickens.

Smith estimates he built between 250 and 300 homes, including his own, in Walpole and surrounding towns. He also built scores of brick walls, walkways and other masonary structures around town. He even built several streets.

Smith did not finish high school because of a serious illness, but he recalls that the upper floor of the old Walpole Town Hall, the site of Walpole's renovated police station, housed a gymnasium and hall where youngsters used to hold dances.

He laments the passing of the old Town Hall as the seat of local government. "The Town of Walpole had no business moving out of town hall," he said with some disgust.

A widower now, Smith married the former Marion Woodard of Foxboro in 1915. Two of his children, Marion Jordan and Ernest Smith live in Walpole, as do a number of his 32 grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

On behalf of the Board of Selectmen, Boragine presented Smith with the Boston Post cane and a proclamation marking Smith's 91st birthday. The ebony and gold cane - 700 were issued to New England towns in 1909 by the now defunct Boston Post newspaper as a promotional gambit - was formerly given to the town's oldest resident. Selectmen have altered the terms and presented the cane to Smith as the oldest living former selectman.

JAMES W. DONAHUE & SON