



To honor founder

Zaccheus Wright may be honored in the name of the library of the new Westford Academy complex. First president of the Academy when founded in 1792, he

also is considered the father of the present free library system in town.

Academy trustees ask library be named for founder Wright

By GORDON B. SEAVEY

WESTFORD — In a belated gesture, the trustees of Westford Academy have asked that the town name the library at the new academy building after the principal founder of the secondary school.

The request came in a letter to the school committee this week suggesting that the title of the sizeable reference and study room be named the Zaccheus Wright Library. This would perpetuate the memory of the person who was not only the leader in founding the town's first high school 182

years ago but who also could be called a founder of the present library system.

When the school committee was searching for a name to put on the present so-called Abbot Middle School on Depot Street last summer, the trustees suggested Wright's name. The academy was then abandoning the building for the new \$5 million complex on Patten Road. Instead, the committee chose the current name honoring a family long prominent in Westford affairs, including the academy.

Undaunted by the popular

decision, the trustees now have come up with possibly a more appropriate suggestion. It would honor a self-educated citizen with no children of his own but having a strong interest in educating those of others. Zaccheus Wright was also a prime mover in establishing home libraries throughout the town, which later developed into the J.V. Fletcher Library in 1895.

With a donation of 30 pounds, Zaccheus Wright along with two others sparked the founding of the academy in 1792. He added to this a gift of 300 pounds in real estate. He was the academy's first president and served for 16 years.

Long after his death in 1811, his name continued to be mentioned with respect as one of the best liked and most public spirited men that Westford had produced.

It is said that he was a person of uncommon size, weighing perhaps 250 pounds, yet active and agile, and "capable, when occasion called, of chasing a flock of sheep as nimbly as the most lithe and youthful of his hired men." He was a farmer and his homestead, now occupied by the Aldrich family, still stands at Chamberlin's Corner.

The trustees have offered to furnish a suitable plaque for the library, should the need arise.