

# First Academy trustees from area towns

By Gordon B. Seavey

To give breadth and stature to the group establishing the original Westford Academy in 1792, Zaccheus Wright and his fellow interested citizens sought a balanced board to function as the original fifteen trustees.

It was a big step for the localities to establish this early secondary school in Massachusetts, superceded only by Governor Drummer in Byfield in 1763 and Phillips Andover, 1778.

Prominent citizens of neighboring communities were carefully selected for the post and the honor which went with it. Some were ministers, military men, lawyers such as Sampson Tuttle of Littleton, and doctors.

Another who comes to mind is a military man from Dracut who at the age of 18 was commissioned a captain in the Colony of Mas-

sachusetts Bay. He was General Joseph Bradley Varnum in whose memory is an elaborate slate marker in the country cemetery in Dracut.

Soon after the Revolutionary war he became a state representative and later a senator. Elected to the national House of Representatives in 1795, where he was speaker, he switched to the Senate where he became its president. He was acting vice president of the U.S. 1813-14. He continued all during this busy career as an Academy trustee until his death in 1821.

The board of trustees was augmented with non-local residents until 1955 when the deaths of Dr. A. Warren Stearns of Billerica and Prof. Arthur D. Butterfield of Chelmsford occurred, making for the first time an all-Westford membership.