

# These are gifts that keep on giving

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**M**ore than a century ago, a graduate of Westford Academy gave \$1,000 each to the Academy and the then social library in trust to invest "forever" so that the income could be applied to the purchase of new books for the general public and financial assistance to "indigent students."

Although the amount seems trivial today, remember back in 1886 the term fee at the Academy was \$3. This initial gift grew and grew over the years so today a \$1,600 income is passed along to worthy students in the form of scholarships.

The donor was Stephen L. Stone, a Boston attorney, whose ancestor, Ebenezer Stone, gave in 1763 the land on which to place the newly purchased 550 lb. town bell. It was to be housed in a small wooden belfry to be

constructed on the Stoneland "southwesterly from the meeting house."

Another Stone, Benjamin, was the sixth preceptor of the Academy. Two brothers, James and Eben had formed the State Street, Boston, law firm of Stone & Stone to which Stephen became associated. Eben became adjutant general of the Commonwealth.

Over the years, the Stone Library Fund has purchased thousands of books. When the Fletcher Library was constructed in 1895, the fund was turned over to the trustees. Director Ellen Rainville reports that its yearly proceeds help to support as well the purchase of museum passes, children and adult programs and building needs.

The Stone family has long since left Westford, but an 1853 map indicates a W. Stone living near the new post office on Littleton Road.