

Westford landmark farm changes hands

By GORDON B. SEAVEY
WESTFORD — A local landmark, known for generations as the "Old Homestead Farm," has changed ownership.

Located at 21 Depot Street, at the crest of Tadmuck Hill, the property commands a wide-angle view northward to the foothills in New Hampshire. It was from here

that Westford's first Apple Blossom Festival was launched.

Occupied for the past decade by Marden H. Seavey, Jr. and his family, the new owners are Mr. and Mrs. Richard H. Hubbell, formerly of 13 East Prescott St. The Seaveys have moved to Carlisle and are living at 155 Woodridge St. until their new home on seven acres is completed on Cross Street in that community.

The Old Homestead was one of the first of the apple orchards in town, although not the largest. It contained less than 30 acres. William Kittredge owned the farm in 1860, which passed on to his son, William L. Kittredge.

THE ORIGINAL HOUSE, estimated to be two centuries old, was enlarged when another house was attached to it. A carriage shed and barn still remain but a much larger barn, a combination horse and cow stable, was demolished several years ago.

Most of the farm's land was put into apples in the late 1800's when William L. Kittredge opened many acres of forest lands for growing ap-

ples. Only a few trees, sadly neglected, remain.

Farming was carried on here later by George H. Cadman during World War I. In 1927, He sold to William C. Harrington and W. Arthur Perrins, who were war buddies.

Under the management of the duo, the "Old Homestead" brand of apples and by-products became popular, and the Perrins are credited with inaugurating the annual apple blossom festival, which is still being held with parades and the crowning of a queen early each May.

A BOSTON FRUIT and vegetable commission merchant, William Woods, who lived in the old Osgood home at the site of the present Center Fire Station, also managed the farm at one time. He was a partner in Colley-Woods and the concern's old sign is preserved under the center dome of the Quincy Hall Market in Boston.

All farming ceased at the Westford location when the town purchased more than 20-acres as a site for a new six-year high school. The price paid was \$30,000 in 1953. The new school opened in the fall of 1955 for classes, still under the name of Westford Academy.

When the fourth Academy building on Patten Road was dedicated in 1973 as a four-year high school, its former home was kept in use as the Abbot Middle School, a companion to the North Middle School in the Graniteville-Forge Village sections of town.