

Westford wanderings

By Gordon B. Seavey

A century ago there was an organization in town called the Westford True Helpers. A diploma, decorated with an illustration of two young people carrying signs reading 'On Honor' and 'For Their Sake' signified membership in the group.

The declaration read 'I do faithfully promise that I will not drink any wine, beer, cider or other alcoholic drinks, except as medicine, so long as I retain this card of membership.' Clara A. Fisher (of the noted Fisher family) was the president and the date was Sept 21 1887. Is this message good today, particularly for teenagers?

Among old Westford Academy records is a receipt dated July 11 1866 for 85 extended to Miss Emma F. Powers by the then Principal Albert E. Davis (a graduate of Bowdoin College) for

the third Spring term tuition. Today's cost to educate an Academy student is in the \$2,000 range.

For a brief period before the closing of the grade school on Boston Road (now the home of the Tadnuck Club), the eighth grade was moved to the Town Hall because of overcrowding. Miss A. Mabel Drew was the teacher.

At that time, 1910, this grade school was located on what was known as School Street. Since the majority of students then concluded their formal education at the end of the eighth grade, those planning to attend the Academy found a bit more preparation was needed.

Then a ninth grade was established and kept classes in the Academy itself. Fannie B. Prescott, later wife of Oscar Spalding, was also a teacher.