

# World War I Days at Westford Academy

12/12/81

By Gordon B. Seavey

Many of Westford's old-timers will remember school days at the Academy during the World War I days. Here's a photo from the archives showing the entire student body with their teachers on the steps of what is now the Roudenbush Community Center.

Today, the students number nearly 1,000; then, the roster was only 64, with an excess of six boys over girls, most unusual. The Center and Parker

Village supplied 34 students, Forge Village and Graniteville eleven each and seven rode the trolley car from Brookside.

Classes are suspended for most of September and October because of a serious influenza epidemic. Also, Principal William C. Roudenbush, who was to serve 25 years as head of the school, was called to Boston State Guard for duty during the police strike for several weeks.

The Academy's baseball

team, playing Littleton, Ayer, Chelmsford, and Harvard lost four out of six matches. There were only four to receive diplomas that year.

School was dismissed on April 22, 1919, to give the students an "once in a life time" opportunity to see some 15,000 of our overseas soldiers on parade, as the Yankee Division at Camp Devens was demobilized. Five Westford women and 137 men served in World War I.



**WESTFORD ACADEMY STUDENTS** student body photo, made in May 1919, was taken on the steps of what was then the second school building, now the Roudenbush Community Center on Main Street, in Westford center. The prestige of the seniors over their schoolmates is demonstrated as the lowly freshmen take their positions down front. The roster is as follows (l to r): Front row: Norman Cutter, Fred Martin, Gordon Seavey, Charles Colburn, Leo McDonald, John Kimball, Rupert Sundberg and Walter Nawrocki. Second row: Norman White, Fred Griffin, Francis Daley, Alice Hosmer, Alice Walsh, Helen Griffin, Mary Sullivan, Marjorie Pollock, Hattie Simpson, Kathleen Kelley, Mabel Dane, John Martin, Morton Seavey\*, and Stanley Bohensko. Third row: William Prescott, Norman Young, Ethel Ripley\*, Marion Fletcher, Edna Sargent, Gladys Ingalls, Catherine O'Neill, Helen Kimball, Carolyn Bell, Marjorie Bell, Gertrude Strandberg and Mildred Fletcher. Seated, last row: Marion Woodbury, Frances Courchaine, Yvonne Anctil, Julia Donnelly, Dorothy Shugrue, Lillian Hunt, Daisy Precious and Florence Caunter. Standing in rear: John Fletcher, Harold Harrington, Forrest White, Chester Lapniewski, Edmund Frovost, Principal Roudenbush, Teachers Mrs. Harold W. Hildreth and Libby Cohen, Mildred Precious, Ethel Collins\*, Ruth Sargent\*, Conrad Cote, Raymond Wall, Henry Harrington and Richard Healy. (\* Graduates) (photo courtesy of Gordon Seavey)