

Looking into Westford's rich past

By Gordon B. Seavey
Eagle Correspondent

The Westford Fire Department had the little fire house in the rear of the town hall moved to Parkerville in 1908. It was located alongside the Parkerville School house on Carlisle Road and it was long enough to hold ladders, fire extinguishers, coils of rope and such that was used in those days to combat fires in the district. Frank Jarvis, 83, recalls as a boy he would join other neighborhood kids to watch the volunteer fireman under the direction of Harry Nesmith reload the hand extinguishers with soda and acid. Even as a kid,

Frank couldn't understand how the ladders would get to a burning building, unless it were across the street.



Westford lost three of its long-term, dedicated town servants in a single year — 1962. They were Charles L. Hildreth, who carried on his duties as town clerk for 51 years at his home, Charlotte Prescott Greig, who was town treasurer for 33 years, working first from her home and later as the only full-time employee at the Town Hall, and Albert A. "Bert" Hildreth, a cemetery commissioner for 18 years and custodian of the West Burying Ground.

It is to be noted that the cemetery commissioners three years ago, in deference to historical facts, approved the return to the original name of this old cemetery. It is the resting place of many Revolutionary and Civil War soldiers and their families, including that of Col. John Robinson, who led 130 local men and boys to Concord Bridge in 1775.

In the interim, the name "Westlawn" has been used, for no other apparent reason than that it sounded good.

Gordon Seavey is a Westford native and retired newspaper publisher.