

The Eagle

Covering Westford, Dunstable and Tyngsboro

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Published Weekly by the Beacon Publishing Co., Inc.

20 Main Street, Acton, Mass.

News Deadline Tuesday at 5 P.M.

Subscription Price — \$6.00 Per Year

2nd Class Postage Paid

in Westford, Mass. 01886

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WINNING PAIR OF MORGANS.

Westford Recollections

by June W. Kennedy

A Few Historic Notes Concerning Parkerville, Westford, Mass. by M. G. Balch — Additional Notes by George Wilder.

Nonesuch, or Parkerville, was the first part of the town to be settled. While the town was a part of Chelmsford, a winding road was built from Chelmsford — (Old Lowell Rd.) — in 1663. Originally it came as far as the Vose property, then crossed the meadow and came out around the Gilbert Parker place — (across from the entrance to Texas Rd.) — crossed Nonesuch Brook and went on towards Groton. — (This old road skirted Baptist or Hart's Pond, wending its way until it cut between the present Spadano and Kennedy homes at 31 and 33 Old Lowell Road, crossing the meadow to the south of the Gamester's home on the present Griffin

Road. There are bar ways in the stone walls indicating the route of the old road. It bordered the swamp at the foot of Bear Hill, crossed the present Carlisle Road and on to Groton. In early maps the Concord Road was called the Groton Road.

The present section of the Old Lowell Road dividing the Wilder land — (this refers to the section of Old Lowell Road that crosses both Carlisle and Concord Roads) — was built in 1726, just a "bridle path" to the main road being built to Minots corner and beyond. It started at the first road at Vose.

The first Parker in Westford was Aaron, born in 1689. There were several descendents of the same name. He lived on the Vose place, and he, or his descendents, made bricks on the hill. With these he built a home — (About 1960 when Mr. Ben Selfredge built his first home at 18 Old Lowell Road,

now the home of Mr. and Mrs. Allen Hanson, he discovered during the excavation the cellar hole foundation and brick from the original Aaron Parker homestead. The Hanson's home straddles the original cellar hole. A well that had been closed was found about 8-10 feet in front of the foundation. The brick house was taken down when George Hutchins built the present Vose house, I think in the early eighteen eighties. — (Present Vose house is the home of the Cavicchi family.)

Lieut. Samuel Chamberlain (1685-1769) bought and sold land in different parts of the State and played an important part in the affairs of the town. He was an original member of the First Church and one of the first board of Selectmen.

His home stood at the junction of Concord and Old Lowell Roads now Henry Wilder's land at the Y. As that section of the Old Lowell Road was not built until 1726, although to be a "bridle path" it evidently made some changes in his home place, which may account for the odd positions of the roadside wells. — (The wells were located right on the edge of the present road. Two wells have been filled; one is left. After his death his son, Samuel, lived in the homestead. It may be that both the Wilder and Berchtold Farms belonged to him originally, for when the Groton (now Concord) Road was built it is recorded as crossing Chamberlain's meadow. — (The Wilder Farm mentioned was bought in 1923 by Henry Wilder and remained in the family until son, George, built his new home on the adjoining hill in the 1960's.)

A deed was given by Timothy Prescott to George Fletcher for the present Berchtold Farm acres in 1825. And George Fletcher built the house soon after with bricks made on the hill. — (Brick yard Hill where the brick was made for the original Aaron Parker home, Berchtold, no doubt the old brick schoolhouse where the Chorney Family lives and other brick structures in town, was located on the site of the present George Wilder homestead on Carlisle Road. On the premises there are samples of the two kinds of brick made. One is reddish-brown building bricks; the other chocolate brown fire brick used for chimneys. The bricks were the same; fire brick was merely heated hotter. Brick making a crude operation at that time and as many as 25% may have been damaged in the making. On the property of Mr. Robert Armstrong of Carlisle Road one may see what appears to be the foundation of an old lime kiln. Lime was used for both cement and plaster.) It was said some of the floor boards for Berchtold were taken from the old house which may have been the Samuel Chamberlain house or one standing near it by the second well. The carpenter was Mabel Drew's grandfather who walked each day from Chelmsford. The original barn burned in 1937. — (In addition they were agriculturally self-sustaining. The cash crops from Berchtold were milk, eggs, fruit and berries. Strawberries, raspberries, asparagus and apples grew in abundance here and in many of Westford's gardens. Berchtold was the home of M. G. Balch and is currently the home of the Dennis McGuires.)

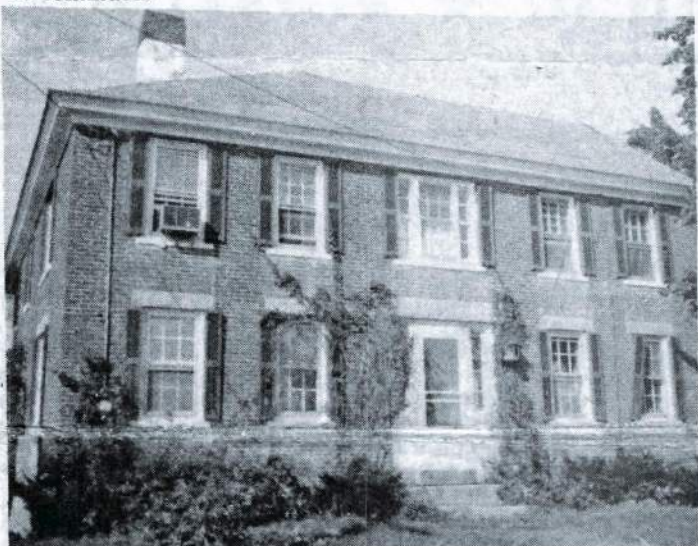
This deed as to bounds was copied when Wayland Balch bought the place from George Fletcher's son Varnum in 1878. Varnum reserved several acres, now Mr. Leonard's land, and one of the barns which was moved across the street and still stands. He built a small house which was later remodeled and improved by Mr. Gladue. — (This house and barn stood at the entrance to Snow Drive and were torn down in the early 1960's when the Snow Drive development was constructed.)

Addison Parker (1793-1836) married Martha Leighton in 1819 and probably built the Wilder House soon after, for in the old 1825 deed he owned Brickyard Hill and Wilder land and worked the clay kilns at the brickyard.

Lieut. Moses Parker, son of Aaron, married Bridget Cummings in 1744. He owned the Lester Carter farm, the home being where the old cellar hole is. (Well and foundation confirm that the house was located on the present property of the Elwin Bagley family.) After her death the present home was built (date uncertain) by a Parker, believed to be James. — (This is the present home of the Ronald Johnson family.) The barn came down during the '38 hurricane. This was the last Parker family to own property in Parker Village. It's amusing to think that the rent in 1923 was \$8.00 a month. The land to the East was owned by an Aaron Parker. The big impressive old house that stood at the foot of Bear Hill was the Gilbert Parker house. — (Across the street from the entrance to Texas Road - cellar hole and well are still visible.) This was burned a number of years ago. The house had a double walled

room as protection against the Indians. George Parker and his family lived here and his six children went to the old brick school nearby (present home of the Chorney family). He was the last Parker in the Village. He died in 1901 at the age of 76. — (The homestead burned.)

The early Parkers were in the Revolution and all held important town offices. Many moved into other communities nearby and the women often married Westford settlers. (To be continued)



THE FORMER HOME of M. G. Balch was constructed from brick made at Brickyard Hill located next to it in Parkerville. Present owners are Mr. and Mrs. Denis McQuire.