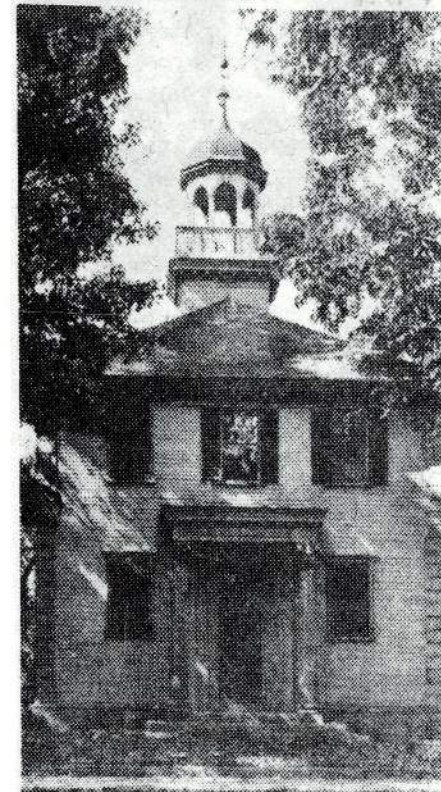


A guide for the tourist and you

BY JUNE W. KENNEDY



The original Westford Academy building was moved across the Common to its present site beside First Parish Hall sometime before 1910. It is undergoing restoration and will be used as the Town Museum. (From the WESTFORD RECOLLECTIONS Series by June W. Kennedy)

Westford Academy-Town Museum
This was originally the site of the Center blacksmith and harness shops. They disappeared with the relocating of the Academy sometime before 1910. As a continuing Bicentennial project, the original Westford Academy is being restored. With state and private funding, plus the expertise of the Nashoba Valley Technical High School, the preservation is making possible a much needed Town Museum. A wealth of Westford's history including pictures, documents, furniture, costumes, farm implements, tape recordings, etc., will be exhibited here. A meeting room will be on the second floor. Although owned by the town, the museum, when completed, will be run by the Westford Historical

Society.

Location: 7G-Boston Road, Westford Common

Union Congregational Church

In 1828 members broke away from First Parish and the prevailing liberalism in support of a more Orthodox theology. In 1829 the grand raising of a new house of worship was held at a cost of \$2,578.56. "As various parts were put in place, prayers were given and hymns were sung. Coffee and refreshments were served, but absent was the strong drink, for temperance was adhered to." Its design was nearly square; the belfry the same. Singers sat in the gallery so that the congregation rose and faced about with their backs to the minister during the hymn singing. In 1842 the horsesheds were erected to the left of the church. Rental for a shed was 10¢ a year. For the special privilege of putting a horse under the Meeting House, the charge was a \$1.00 a year.

Leonard Wheeler recalled the two box stoves whose coals provided the heat for his mother's foot stove. Completely remodeled in 1896, the church's simple lines have disappeared beneath the "Akron" architecture fashionable in that period. This church reunited with the church across the common in 1955. Today it is the Parish Hall of First Parish Church United of Westford. Many community organizations use the facility.

Location: 7G - Lincoln Street, Westford Common.

J.M. Fletcher Store

Here at the country store one could find everything: fresh ground coffee, barrels of flour and sugar, rubbers, overalls or nails. The pot-bellied stove sat in the middle of the floor. In addition to groceries, it featured a soda fountain complete with wire-back chairs and tables for the serving of ice-cream and sandwiches. During the Democratic Administrations, the Post-Office was kept here. In 1933 it became the Red & White Store. The store closed in 1958.

Location: 7G-6 Lincoln Street, beside First Parish Hall

Trolley Line

The branch line of the Lowell and Fitchburg St. Railway Co. (North Chelmsford-West Chelmsford-Brookside-Westford Center) came up Cummings Road, Depot Street and on to Main Street as far as First Parish Meet-



THEN -- In 1828 members broke away from First Parish and formed the Union Congregational Church. In design it was nearly square; the belfry the same. To the left of the church were the horsesheds. Rental for a shed was 10 cents a year. (Photo from the book WESTFORD RECOLLECTIONS 1729-1979 by June W. Kennedy)



Here on Lincoln Street facing Westford Common is the old J. M. Fletcher country store, later the Red & White Store. Present owners are Mr. and Mrs. Austin Fletcher. (A Fletcher photo from the book WESTFORD RECOLLECTIONS 1729-1979 by June W. Kennedy, on sale at the "Book-tique" or from the author.)

ing House. Nicknamed the "Jolly Jumper," it was bright yellow in color. The service continued from 1907 until 1920. It was not self supporting.

Location: Described above

John Fletcher Home

In 1893 the original 1748 deed to Westford Common was found among papers in the attic of this home. Although it was signed and witnessed in 1748 during the reign of King George II, the selectmen discovering there was no record of it in the registry of deeds, had it duly recorded. Sarah Loker, the founder and first president of the Tad-muck Women's Club lived here for many years. Also, it is the present home of Ellen Harde, Westford's first selectwoman. 1970

Location: 7G-4 Lincoln Street, next to Fire-Police Station

J.V. Fletcher Library

Interest in a library began as early as 1797 with the formation of the Westford Library Company. In 1801 the name became The Proprietors of the Social Library in the Town of Westford, with private homes and later the Town Hall housing the books. It was not until 1896 that a public library came into being. The building, of buff colored brick, was the gift of Jonathan Varnum Fletcher of Belmont, Mass. Mr. Fletcher summered at his birthplace, Cold Spring Farm located at the sharp bend on Depot Street hill. He was a descendant of Solomon Keyes, the first permanent settler in the town. The library has undergone many changes during the past few decades. A lecture room remains on the third floor. A new children's wing was added in the 1960's. The trustees and personnel offer a variety of activities including an annual book sale, Story Hours for Children and an active Friends of the Library Association. The Mary Atwood fund provides free lectures and educational benefits to the community.

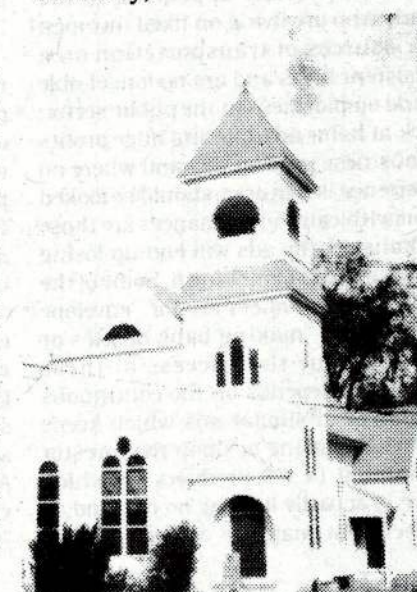
Location: 7G--Main Street, Westford Common

*Note-- Until the fire of 1891, the Bancroft and Wright house stood on the site of the J.V. Fletcher Library. Here on April 3, 1843 congregated a zealous group of Millerites prior to assembly on the hill-top to await ascension into heaven. Having given up their worldly goods, they sat in flowing white robes, praying fervently to await the Judgment Day.

Typical of small towns, Westford had a village character, this one called Crazy Amos. Amos was not a member of the Millerites, but he was not to be outdone. While believers were still inside the Bancroft place, he secured a large horn and let out several ear splitting blasts on the



In 1893 the original deed to Westford Common was found in the attic of this home presently owned by the Harde family. (From the WESTFORD RECOLLECTIONS Series by June W. Kennedy)



NOW -- In 1896, the simple lines of the Union Congregational Church disappeared beneath the "Akron" architecture fashionable in that period. (A Collins photo from the WESTFORD RECOLLECTIONS Series by June W. Kennedy)

front lawn. At the sound of the horn, the worshipers tumbled from doors and windows shouting "Hallelujah! Glory to God! The time has come!" thinking the horn was a summons by Gabriel.

"You fools! Go dig your potatoes!" screamed Crazy Amos. "Angel Gabriel won't go a-diggin' 'em for you!"

April 3, 1843 passed uneventfully and the earth, instead of being swept by fire, donned garments of spring and burst into leaf and song. (Yankee magazine, April 1963) That's how the story goes.

Location: 7G--Main Street, Westford Common