

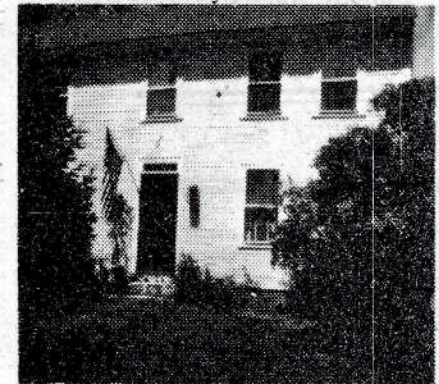
Westford Recollections 7/24/80

"A Guide For The Tourist and You"

(Part IV)

By JUNE W. KENNEDY
TELEPHONE OFFICE

In the ell of this early home was Westford's telephone office. Operators Phonsie Isles and daughter, Hilda Bosworth, were most obliging. Many times with eight or ten on a party line, the office became a real convenience, an answering service for local doctors, a place to leave messages for friends. Townspeople were upset in 1942 when central dialing ended this personal service. During World War II, the ell housed the Raion Board. The garage on this property was the old hearse house. It had originally been located between the Library and First Parish Church. Location: 7G—58 Main Street, three houses down from Library.



Until 1941, the ell of this home, located diagonally across from the Town hall, housed Westford's telephone office. (From the WESTFORD RECOLLECTIONS Series by June W. Kennedy)

TOWN HALL

Built in 1870 for \$9,296.08, this building witnessed many a lively town meeting. For many years it was also a beehive of social activity. "It was the best dance floor around" recall those who remember the days when they came in horse-drawn barges and sleighs to attend a Troop F Cavalry, Firemen's or Graduation Ball. Grange and Tadmuck meetings, Church Fairs, Academy graduations, Home-Extension silent movies (with piano for background), were all held here. The Victorian tower toppled during the 1938 hurricane and was replaced with the present one of colonial styling. In 1974 the new police and fire station addition was dedicated. Location 7G—55 Main Street, Westford Center.

ROUDENBUSH COMMUNITY CENTER

This is the second Westford Academy building. It served the town from 1897-1955. After 1912 it was no longer a private Academy. The town bought it; in 1905 it became the public high school. In 1955 it was renamed the William E. Roudenbush School after its principal of twenty-five years. It continued in use as an elementary school. The Westford Baptist Temple held its first gatherings here in 1970. Presently serving as a Community Center, it offers a Pre-School, Community Commodities counseling and health services, classes

and a meeting place for organizations. It also houses the Westford branch of the Y.W.C.A.

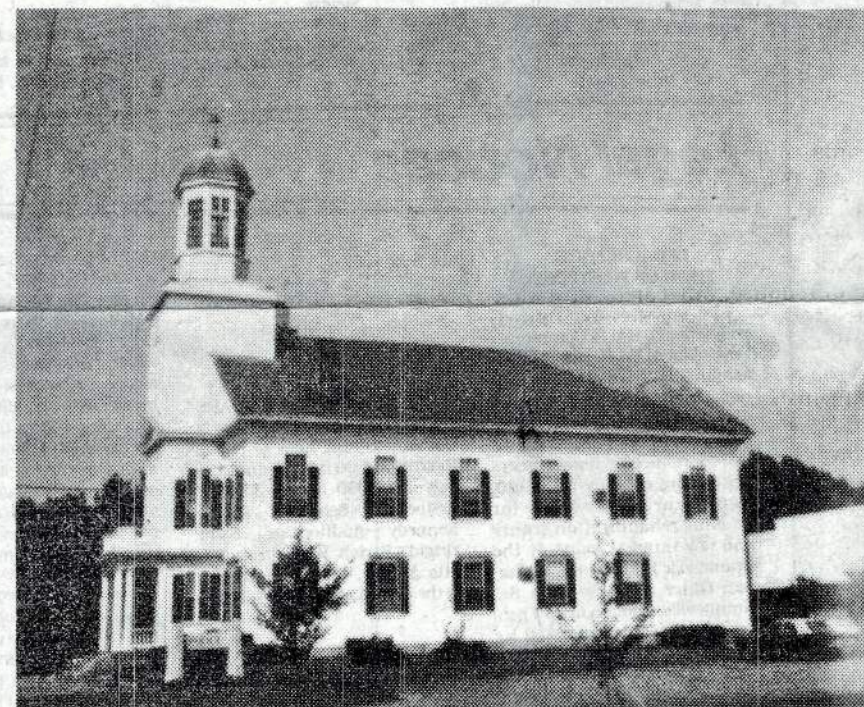
17. REV. WILLARD HALL HOMESITE

The 1730 Westford map and early foundation tell us that this brick-end colonial homestead stands on the homesite of Rev. Willard Hall, first minister of the town (1727-1775). The original home was destroyed by fire, but the barn and outbuildings are thought to be those which belonged to Rev. Hall. A heart cut-out on an old Christian door is an interesting feature.

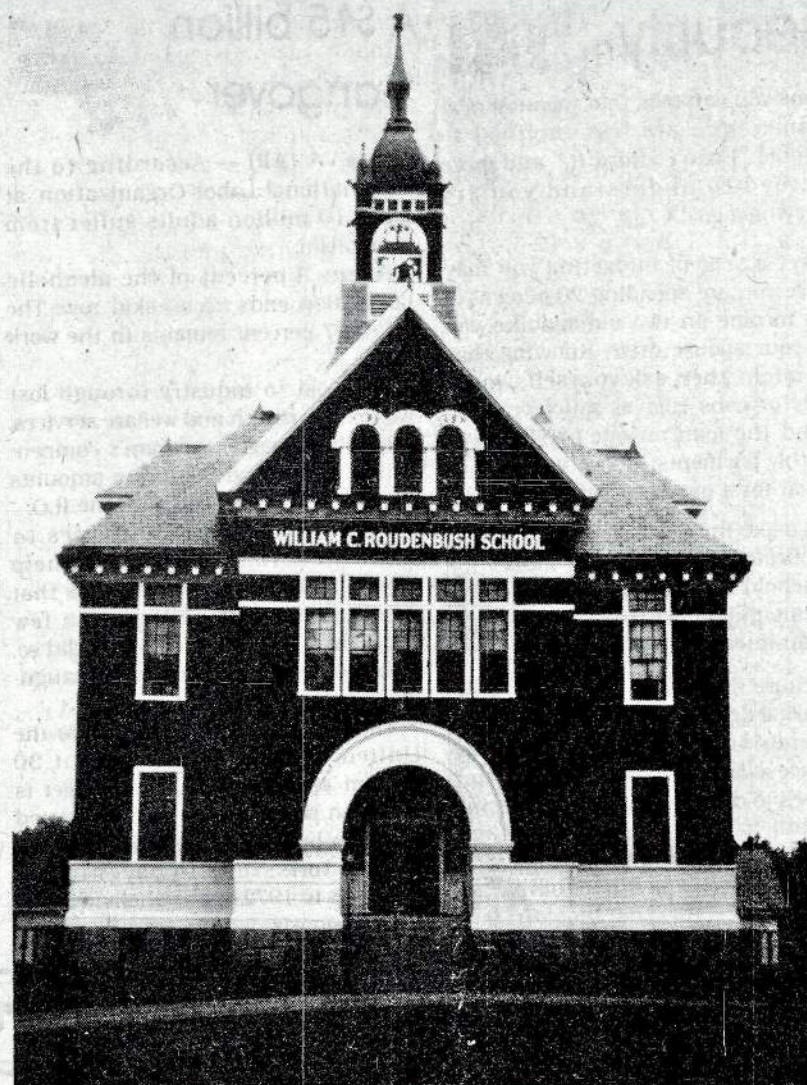
Later occupant, Leonard Wheeler, was founder of the Westford Grange and served as local tax collector—"That was around 1906," recalled Clyde Prescott, "when the taxes for our farm at Chamberlin's Corner were about \$40 for the year and father wondered what the devil the world was comin' to!" Behind this home, and stretching down the hillside back toward the Meeting House, was an area known as Paradise. It offered a flowing spring and a variety of wildflowers. Location: 7G—66 Main Street, directly across from The Roudenbush Community Center.

FROST SCHOOL

The opening of this consolidated school in 1908 brought to a close several of the neighborhood district schools. It was named after Westford Academy preceptor, William E. Frost, the man who introduced the written exam to the system here. Some, living today, remember when this spot was a pasture and they had to jump from hammock to hammock to keep from getting their feet wet. (The tennis court was the frog pond.) Miss Tuttle, a Westford teacher of 70 years, had fond memories of the children at recess snatching apples from the surrounding orchards, pounding them



NOW—The victorian tower on the Town hall toppled during the 1938 hurricane and was replaced with one of Colonial design. (A Collins photo from the WESTFORD RECOLLECTIONS Series)



The second Westford Academy building built in 1897 is today the Roudenbush Community Center. (From the WESTFORD RECOLLECTIONS Series)

on the stone wall and sucking out the juice. Location: 7G—Beside Roudenbush Community Center.

19. FAIRVIEW CEMETERY - EAST BURYING GROUND

Many New England churches have a burying ground at their back door. The Meeting House at Westford does not. Fairview Cemetery, down the hill on Main Street, may have been more centrally located for the earliest settlers of the West Precinct of Chelmsford. That mid-seventeenth century settlement predated the erection of the Meeting



The home property of the town's first minister and founder of the local Grange now belongs to the L. Grey Perry Family. (From the WESTFORD RECOLLECTIONS Series)

House and the incorporation of this town. The oldest headstone at Fairview is date 1702 and bears the name of Abram Wright. Many of the old family names are found here: Fletcher, Spalding, Butterfield, Hildreth, Wright, Prescott, Keyes, Richardson, Chandler, Parker, Cummings, Abbot, Underwood, Leighton, Carver, Proctor, Minot and Cameron. The Rev. Willard Hall stone is the most prominent one up on a knoll. It is a flat slab of slate mounted tablewise on three supporting granite legs. Buried among the patriots, he was the only Loyalist in Westford at the time of the American Revolution. His inscription reads:

Erected in the memory of
The Reverend
Willard Hall,
First Pastor of the
Church of Christ
in Westford
Died March 1779
Age 77 Years
and in the 52nd year



THEN—Built in 1870, the Town Hall witnessed many a lively meeting, and for many years was the scene for balls, graduations and silent movies. (A MacDougall photo from the book WESTFORD RECOLLECTIONS 1729-1979 by June W. Kennedy on sale at the "Book-tique" or from the author)

of his Ministry

Another interesting marker, a grist stone, bears the name of Heywood. Heywood & Burbeck ran the grist mill down on the Stony Brook at Westford Depot. There is a wealth of local history contained within the walls of Fairview of

Cemetery. Local historian, Gordon B. Seavey, is planning a walking tour of the cemetery for interested townspeople. Look for the date in the "Eagle." Location: 8G—Corner of Main Street and Tadmuck Road.

TO BE CONTINUED