

# Westford Recollections

## STAGE ROADS AND TAVERNS

by Mrs. Charles S. Kennedy

Westford was one of the great thoroughfares from Vermont to Boston. The road passed through Groton, and Groton Ridges; there a choice was made, one road leading through Forge Village, Carlisle, Bedford and Lexington; the other through Littleton, Acton and Concord. The travel on both roads was very heavy, and it is said that up to 70 teams of horses, or oxen, in a line, could be seen going through the south part of town. There were at least five taverns in the town to accomodate the wayfarers.

Dupee's Tavern which bears the date of 1760 is the present home of Mr. and Mrs. Lewis English on Carlisle Road just beyond the railroad tracks at the Route 27 intersection. Located on the main road from Westford to concord, it is highly possible that the Colonial Minutemen might have stopped here on their way to battle in 1775. Should this fact ever be authenticated, Mrs. English has in mind to paint a mural on her dining room wall depicting the soldiers as they stopped for quick refreshment. The Dupee's were a Chelmsford family. The building was built as a tavern with a full length ballroom occupying the front half of the second story. Benches surrounded the ballroom. None of the old features of the tavern remain today—even the bee-hive oven was removed in the 1930's when the place was remodeled. The Earl Selfridge home located at the intersection of Routes 225 and 27 was a stage coach stop, it being the main route from Lowell to Framingham. Here passengers changed horses and walked to Dupee's Tavern to refresh themselves.

Another stage stop and tavern was what many of the townspeople remember as Hanley Yarns in Forge Village. Originally, of course, this was a one family homestead owned by the Prescott family who settled Forge Village in 1646. The horse mounting block which was necessary for the long-skirted woman to gracefully ascend and descend the carriages and horses was located by the tavern. Now it may be found at the gravesite of Richard Prescott on Cemetery Road. The Tavern itself has just recently been painted green with black shutters and will be used for offices.

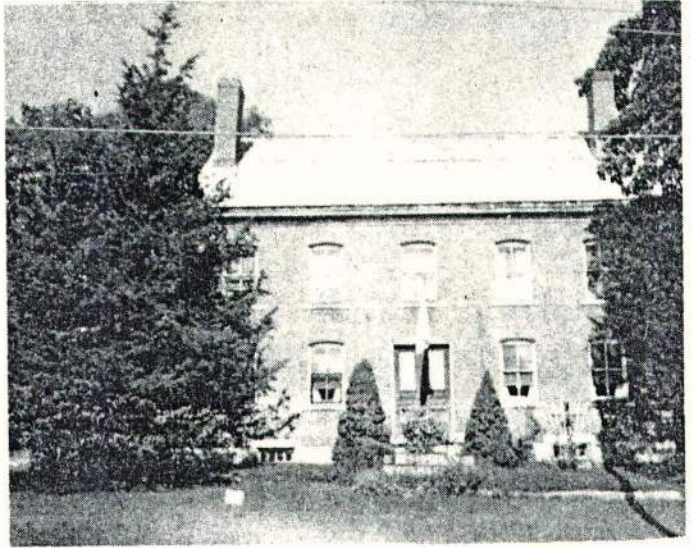
A third Tavern is the old Red Brick one situated near the intersection of Groton and Dunstable Roads. Mr. Charles Sleeper and family reside there. If anyone knows any historical background of this Red Brick Tavern please forward the information to us.

Bearing the tavern sign dated 1713 and located on the green in Westford is the Edward Lamson home. Because of its smaller size, it is doubtful that large gatherings assembled here. The Widow Fletcher married Cyrus Hamlin so that 13 children filled the home. Before the days of the railroad travelers arrived by stage, or more frequently on horse back. Daniel Webster, in one of his rides through the country, met and fell in love with Grace Fletcher whom he married. This Tavern never went through the gingerbread stage of restoration and consequently is charming in its simplicity. Currently a new addition is being added to the rear of this Tavern.

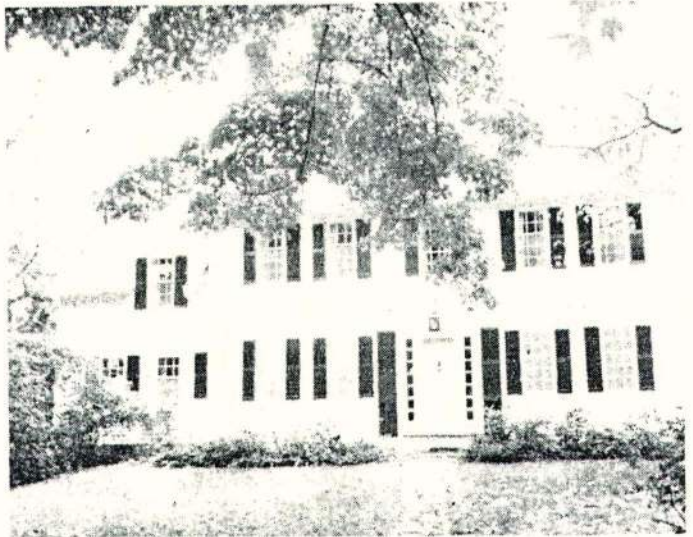
Next week - The Missing Tavern.



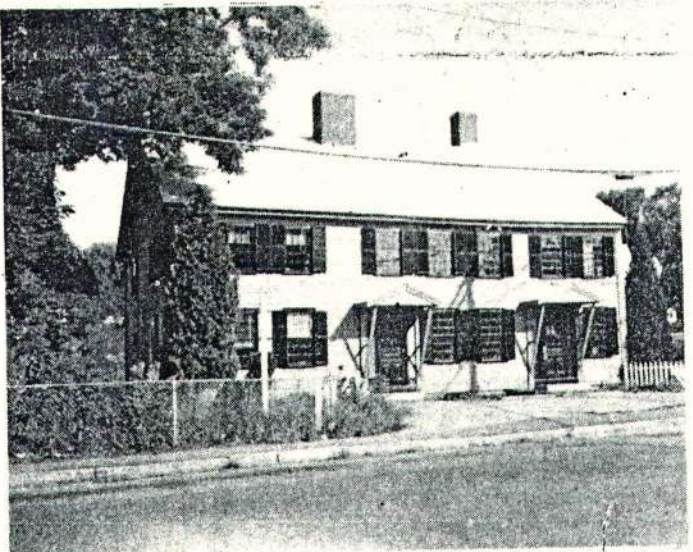
DUPEE Tavern on Carlisle Road.



RED BRICK Tavern on Groton Road.



TAVERN dated 1713 located on the Westford Green.



TAVERN in Forge Village