

stayed for what seemed two to three "mortal" hours. When the wind calmed a little the teacher and I proceeded to crawl on our hands and knees, through leaves and branches, to my front door. I went up to the third floor to the ballroom. The tree had crashed into the front putting two holes in the roof where branches had poked through. Luckily, there was not much interior damage. The day the tree was removed with a winch I left because I was afraid it would fall back onto the house, causing greater damage. It didn't!"

AUSTIN FLETCHER: "I was living right across the street from the common, just where I am today. I remember watching the flagpole falling and the many trees being uprooted. After the storm I found a piece of slate from the Town Hall roof which had been wedged into a tree. If that had hit a person with full force, it would have killed him."

ROBERT SPINNER "The trees fell like toothpicks on Plain Road. It was just a dirt path then, but it took two weeks to clean out and make the road passable. At our house in Forge Village we lost our power for six weeks. My brother and I drove the town school bus. After driving home that day I tried in vain to close the barn door where the bus was kept. Finally, I had to call my wife and cousin to hold one door shut while I latched the other one. Even after putting boards through the latch and tying it with sturdy rope, the door still managed to blow open."

BEN PRESCOTT: "I was working in the store next to the library, the chain store. The wind started to blow and howl and they had predicted we were going to get an awful storm. It really was a bad storm. Many of the trees on the common—I can remember seeing them swinging and



The Kimball Farm on Route 110 was nearly 50% destroyed in the '38 hurricane.

swaying. Every once in a while one of them would come right up by the roots. Very many of them came up that way that afternoon. I can remember there was a young fellow

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The old store beside the library where Ben Prescott piled boxes of canned vegetables against the plate glass windows during the '38 storm.



The '38 Hurricane seemed to vent its fury at Westford common.

The '38 Hurricane

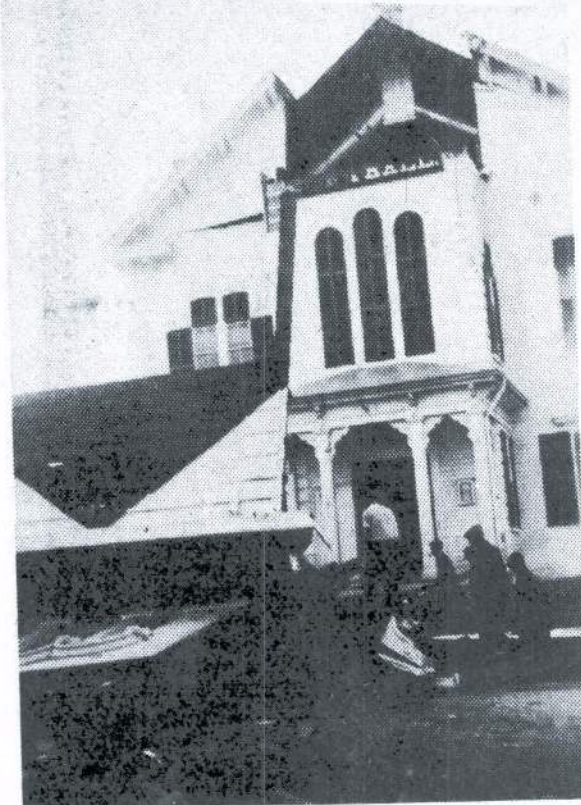
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with me in the store that used to work for me some. We were wishing it were time to go home, but when it came time we didn't dare. So we stayed. The wind was blowing against those plate glass windows. We piled cases of vegetables, canned vegetables and things like that in the window against the plate glass to stop it from blowing in. I don't know if the cans really held it there, but it didn't blow in anyway.

"There was a man who used to work at a poultry farm—about a mile and a half down the street. About half past nine or ten o'clock he came to the store. He lived down near where I did then (Chamberlain's Corner). He says to me, 'are you going home tonight?' I don't know, I'm gonna start. I've got a nice axe in the car and I think maybe we can make it.' So we locked the door, got into the car and off we started. The tower on the Town Hall had been blown right off. It toppled right across the street so we had to drive up over the curbing again and out onto Main Street. I think quite a few times we had to stop and just chop the tops off some of the trees to make room to get by. We made it.

"I remember I wasn't home too long when a couple carrying a kerosene lantern came walking down the road from Chelmsford and stopped into the house. They had been to Lowell, or somewhere, and had quite a time of it getting home so I said to them, 'Well, I just came from Westford and I think I can probably take you back as far as the Town Hall.' 'Well,' my brother says, 'I'll go along with you.' We all got into the old chevy, headed uptown and dropped them off. Then we got back."

GEORGE PERKINS: "At Forge Village the maples were going in circles. The wind took the water 6' high and you couldn't see across Forge Pond. Hundreds of pines were down. The next morning we were locked in. The only way to find the road was by the ruts. We had to work our way to the road sawing trees that had been 50 to 60' tall. Even the roots were 10 to 13' high. I took my daughter across the Pond by boat to the Cameron School, but there was no school. I remember seeing a boat up in a tree. It was quite a storm!"



The tower of the Town Hall came crashing across Main St., Westford, at about 6 o'clock on Wednesday, September 21, 1938. A tower of colonial styling replaced the victorian one.