

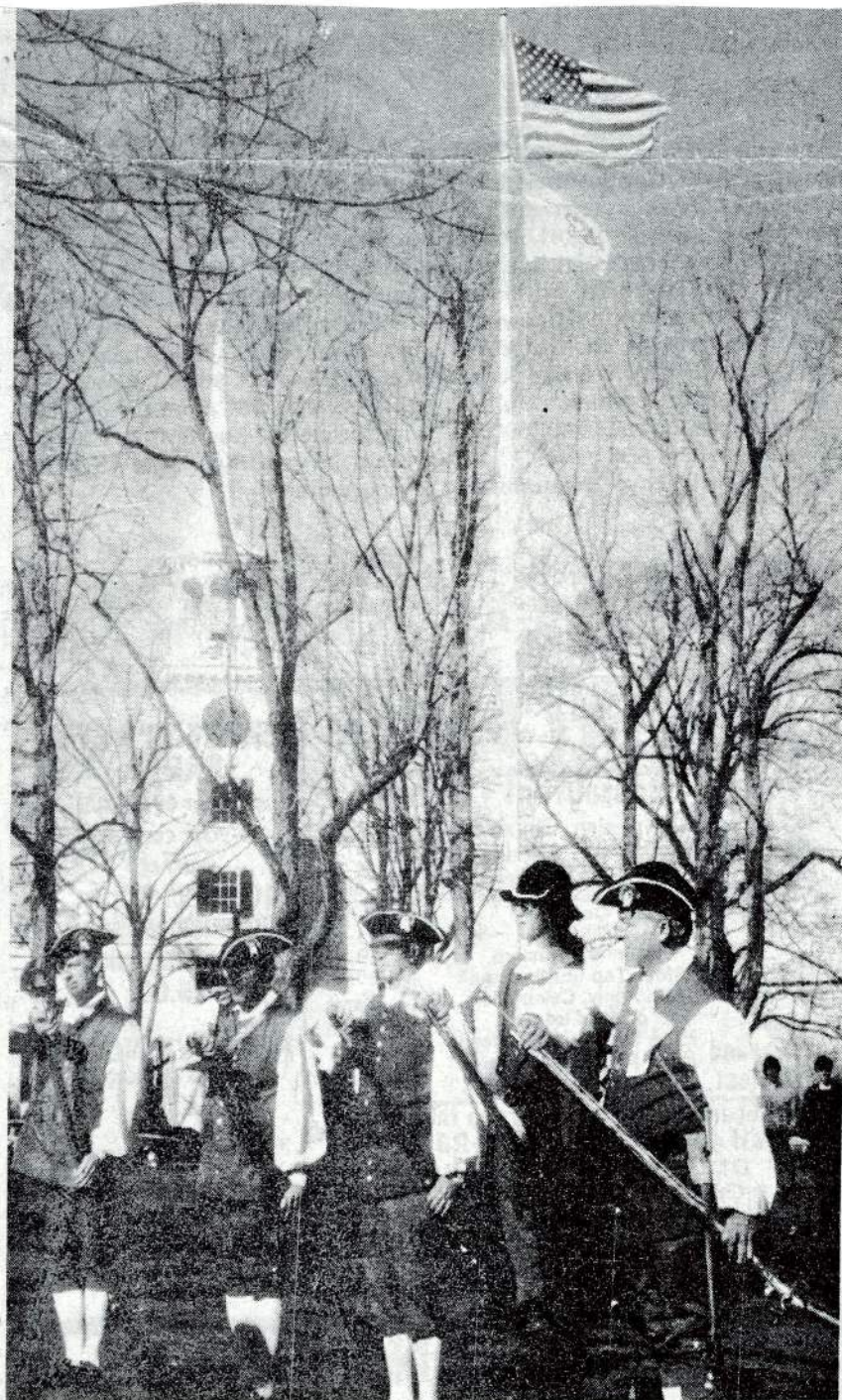
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THE WESTFORD EAGLE

YESTERDAY...TODAY By June W. Kennedy



YESTERDAY...The third meetinghouse from across the Town Common, was built in 1794. Originally it had one large room with galleries on three of its sides and the pulpit raised high on the fourth. Typical of New England meetinghouses, a huge sounding-board, used to increase the volume of the preacher's voice, hung from the ceiling; the pews were square in form with paneled doors. In 1846, the building was divided into two floors. The year of 1868 brought two major changes. The broad side of the meetinghouse, which faced the street, was turned 90 degrees towards the present town library, and, after 144 years, women were made voting members of the parish! Town meetings were held at this site for about 140 years. Note the horse sheds in the rear. (From the book **WESTFORD, RECOLLECTIONS 1729-1979** by June W. Kennedy on sale at the "Book-tique" or from the author)



TODAY...In 1748 the Town Common was bought for twenty pounds (not five pounds as voted) from Joseph Underwood for a training field. The original deed was found in 1893 and immediately recorded in the Middlesex North District Registry. Westford Colonial Minuteman frequently returned to the muster field for celebrations during the American Bicentennial. Here they stand before the new flagpole and flag in a reaffirmation of the cause for liberty. ...And here in the old historic First Parish Meeting House, just across from the Common, at the traditional 11:00 p.m. **CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE**, friends and members of the parish will gather to usher in the joyous Christmas Day. (From the book **WESTFORD RECOLLECTIONS 1729-1979** by June W. Kennedy)

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