1783 / 1983

Reflections of Longmeadow

Edited by Linda M. Rodger and Mary S. Rogeness

Reflections of Longmeadow

LONGMEADOW has three claims to fame: It is the only American town with this picturesque and unique name; it was the first town granted a charter by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts after the Revolutionary War; and it remains even today one of the few true picturebook New England towns, its elongated town green surrounded by stately homes and the traditional white church. Appropriately, *Reflections*, a new and fascinating pictorial history of Longmeadow, is a feature of the town's 1983 Bicentennial Celebration.

The most recent history of Longmeadow was published for the centennial celebration of 1883 when the town had twice its present area and a tenth of the current population. Although *Reflections* principally records the many changes which have taken place since that year, for the benefit of readers unfamiliar with the town's early history, the story begins with the early settlement of the meadowlands on the Connecticut River. The lively text traces the community's development from 1644 when the Puritan settlers arrived until 1983 by which time the town had become a thriving suburb with some 16,000 residents.

In telling about Longmeadow's growth and development, the authors have covered every important aspect of the town's history. The text is a cornucopia of information as it discusses a wide range of town activities. Readers are able to see why East Longmeadow separated from the parent

(continued on back flap)

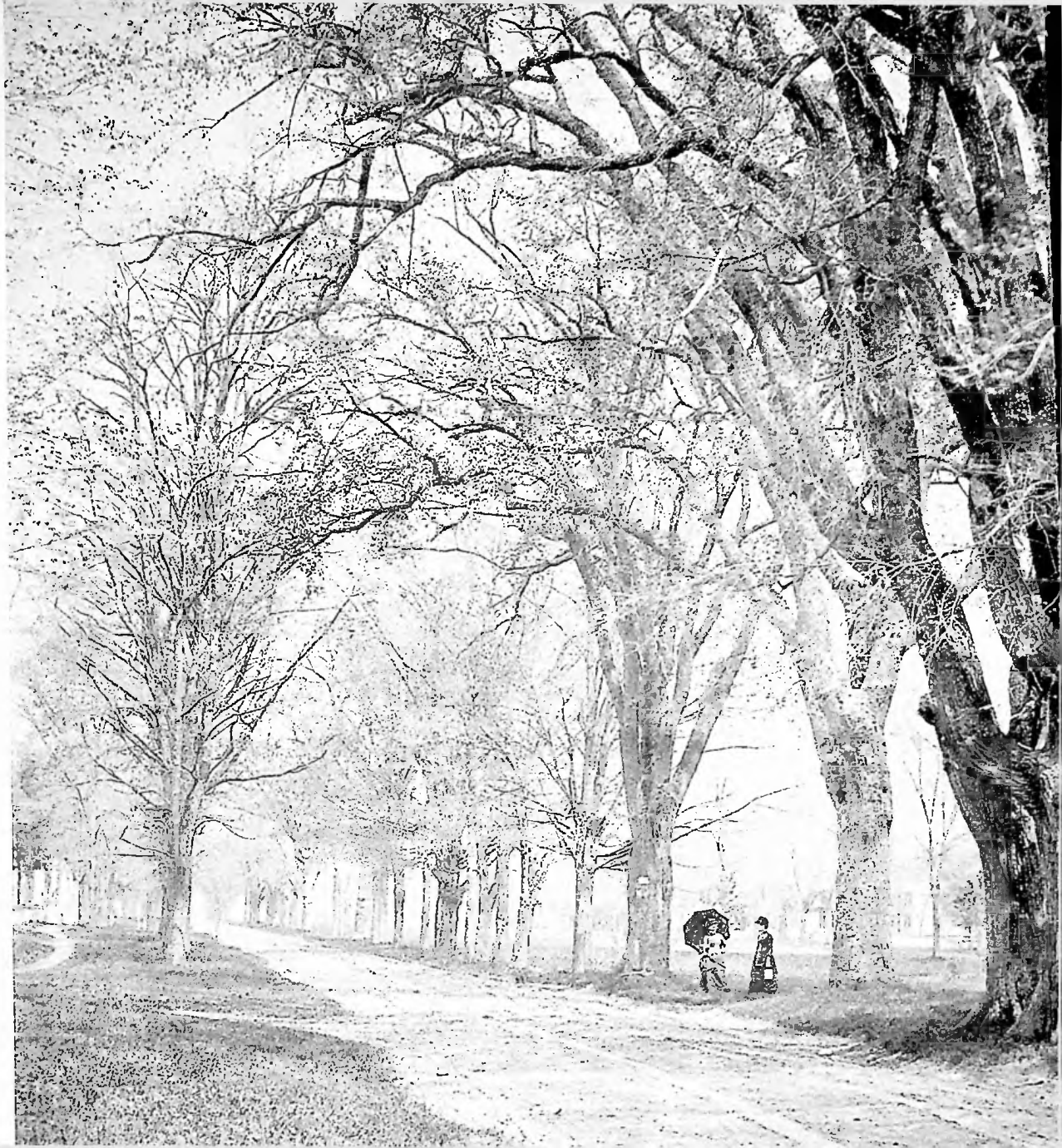
Longmeadow; how changes in transportation influenced the town's growth; how the housing patterns developed. They learn of religious diversification coming to the New England town and how various organizations and clubs have met the social and cultural needs of different generations.

Reflections is a mini-history if measured by its length, but its comprehensive although compressed treatment raises it to a level above the usual town history. Supplementing the readable and interesting text are many fine illustrations carefully selected from the Historical Society archives or kindly lent to the project by interested residents. Thus *Reflections* makes it possible for all townspeople to see the old and rare photographs and visualize events which have brought us to the beginning of a third century of life as a town. Finally, this chronicle enables all Longmeadow citizens to be proud of having preserved so much of their past.

An active Longmeadow Historical Society has encouraged interest in local history and inspired the participation of many town residents in the preparation of this book. Linda Rodger and Mary Rogeness served as planners and co-editors of the project.

Linda Rodger graduated from Tufts University and took her MLS at the State University of New York. She has worked as a librarian and research associate and has resided in Longmeadow since 1973. She is married and has one child.

Mary Rogeness earned her BA at Carleton College. A member of the Longmeadow School Committee, she has also served as an editor for the Historical Society. She and her husband have three children and have lived in Longmeadow since 1970.



Miss Annie Coomes and Mrs. Daniel Burbank on the Green in front of First Church about 1882.

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Fifteen years have elapsed since the first printing of "Reflections." Although the outside world reveals many changes, the pride of the present officers and directors of the Longmeadow Historical Society in the rich history of our town endures unchanged.

Linda C. Abrams, President
June, 1998

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Introduction

IN ITS 1983 BICENTENNIAL, Longmeadow celebrates the 200th anniversary of its incorporation as a town. Since the Bicentennial Commission was established in 1980, hundreds of residents have participated in small meetings to plan dozens of bicentennial events for 1983. The publication of *Reflections of Longmeadow* completes the year of celebration. In it the town communicates its pride in the past and records for the future the changes that have occurred over the past one hundred years.

The first history of Longmeadow was published for the centennial year of 1883. That book, sponsored by town appropriations and private donations, was delivered to all households. An attempt to publish an updated history of Longmeadow for the sesquicentennial in 1933 failed when voters at the town meeting denied the needed appropriation. In 1983 a partnership between the town, the Bicentennial Commission, and the Historical Society has made possible the publication of this pictorial history of Longmeadow.

Reflections has been produced by many volunteers who worked together researching Historical Society archives, old records, and other sources to compile the story of Longmeadow. The editors are grateful to those whose names appear on the following page with the titles of their contributions.

Townspeople came forward to share old pictures, letters, scrapbooks, and personal memories. The historical knowledge of Virginia B. Flint and Joan McNally and the family records of Peggy Godfrey have aided in the preparation of the text. Picture editor Sarah Cothran's skill has enriched the volume, as has the photography of Randolf Kuerzel.

The editors are indebted to the many other people who also contributed to the production of *Reflections*. Additional thanks go to Mabel Swanson, Curator of Storrs House, Charles Wilkinson, President of the Longmeadow Historical Society, and Robert Magovern, Chairman of the Bicentennial Commission, for their enthusiastic support of this project.

Linda M. Rodger

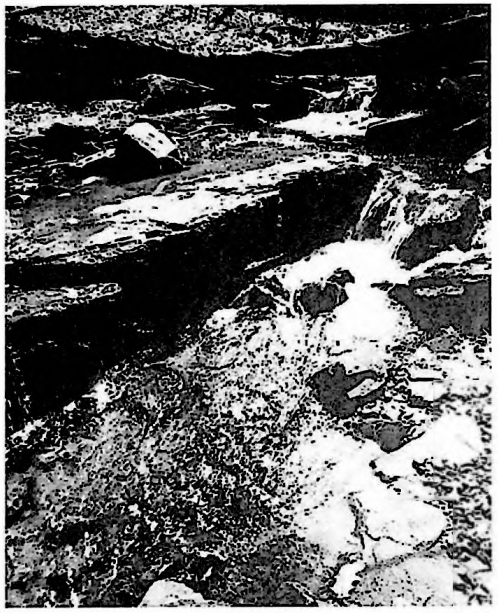
Mary S. Rogeness

Longmeadow, Massachusetts, July 1, 1983

Authorship

1

The Land



This formation at the foot of Warren Terrace is the only rock ledge in town.

THE TOWN OF LONGMEADOW, only nine square miles in area, lies along the east bank of the Connecticut River, bordered on the south by the Connecticut State line and on the north by the city of Springfield. To the east is East Longmeadow, and directly across the river is Agawam, home of the Indian tribe that welcomed the first white inhabitants.

Longmeadow is divided into three principal land types: the floodplain of the Connecticut River, known fondly to residents as "the meadows"; the high plain, separated by a 60- to 80-foot escarpment about three fourths of a mile east of the river and now thickly populated; and the valleys cut by Cooley, Wheelmeadow, Raspberry, and Longmeadow brooks as they drain downhill into the river basin.

The Connecticut, still known by its Indian name meaning the long river, has been central to the geological and geographical formation of the town. The upland, now a grid of streets and houses, was once a terrace of the river which remained as the current cut its bed deep into the valley floor. At river level the floodplain, with its rich layer of alluvial soil, was used by the Indians and later by the white settlers for gardens and pasture, and is now largely conserved by the

Development of Academy Heights in the 1960s uncovered the sandy delta of the glacial lake.

town as an important natural resource. As the river flows from its rise 370 miles north, close to the Canadian border, it divides Vermont and New Hampshire and enters our area through the water gap between Mount Tom and Mount Holyoke. Served by several tributaries upstream, the flow is broad and strong as it passes Longmeadow and continues south 70 miles to Long Island Sound.

Natural forces have been at work for millions of years, causing the land mass to rise and fall, great lakes to appear as the ice cap receded, and the lava from beneath the earth's crust to erupt and harden into mountains. These events, imprinted in the textbook of the rocks for geologists to decipher, gradually formed the landscape of the green and pleasant town of Longmeadow.

The thread of the Connecticut, which remained a constant in the periods of cataclysm, curves through fields and gorges, often wandering in its bed to create meanders and oxbows and sometimes to expose Indian sites in what was previously dry land. The river has relentlessly carried a load of silt and sediment from the northern mountains to form and re-form the landscape. In the Paleozoic era, a period lasting about 370 million years, the valley sank below sea level as far north as Greenfield, and the sea flowed in. Geology shows that tides rose and fell on the heights of Wilbraham and Blandford and that fish swam over the present location of Longmeadow.

Still the current of the Connecticut continued to run under the inland sea, and the sand it carried hardened into Triassic, or Longmeadow, sandstone. This is the beautiful red brownstone quarried in East Longmeadow and used for buildings here, in New York City, and elsewhere.

When the current era, called the Cenozoic era, or the Age of Mammals, dawned about 63 million years ago, a crack appeared in the surface of the earth, and the molten lava which poured forth created Mount Tom, the Holyoke Range, and other, smaller hills. These, and the far more ancient hills of Wilbraham and Blandford, were strong enough to resist the pressure of the great glacier that pressed down from the north for almost 1 million years. Geologists say a sheet of ice, about a half-mile thick, moved slowly south to meet the sea where it began to melt and retreat again. In its place was left a large body of water known as Lake Springfield, which extended from Middletown, Connecticut, to Holyoke. Once again the land that was to become Longmeadow was inundated; some of the sand we find under our lawns is undoubtedly sediment from the lake bottom.

In the eastern part of the town, roughly from Laurel Street to the East Longmeadow line, the sand closely underlies a thin layer of topsoil, which sustains mostly conifers and scrubby growth, and is often the despair of homeowners. We can assume that this sand was formed from delta deposits on the shore of the glacial lake which included Longmeadow in its outer perimeters. As one goes westward to the escarpment of the ancient riverbed, which drops off from the Longmeadow Street level to the meadows, the sand layer narrows and is buried more deeply. The overlying soil layer is glacial outwash, friable and well drained, and the underlying stratum is silty clay. These strata are the results of the action of the glacier, which is believed to have finally retreated about 10,000 years ago.

Long before our forefathers arrived from across the sea, and before our Indian brothers roamed the riverbank and forest, the landmass rose anew. Lake Springfield gradually drained, and an environment developed which was sympathetic to the survival of many smaller mammals. Vegetation began to grow on the newly exposed terraces and deltas, freed of the burden of fire, ice, and water. The Connecticut River Valley was now ready to sustain and nourish the life form of man.

2

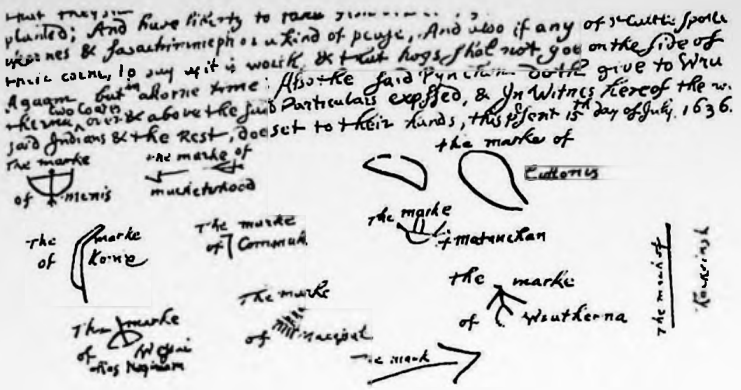
Indians

The plaque on Long Hill Street in Springfield, erected in 1911.

IN 1636, when the Puritan settlers left Roxbury, Massachusetts, to settle along the broad Quinneckiot River, they found a society that had been on this continent for over 20,000 years.

The Indians of the Connecticut River Valley belonged to the Algonquian language tribes, which had seven principal nations in New England. Each nation was made up of many small tribes, and all were members of the Pocumtuck confederacy. The Puritans originally called the area around Springfield the Agawam Plantation after the Agawam Indians who lived along the Connecticut River there. In 1633-34 a smallpox epidemic spread death throughout the New World, and the Agawam Indians had not escaped. When the Puritans arrived in western Massachusetts, the Indian population of the Connecticut River Valley was probably about 1,200 to 1,900; fewer than 200 were living in the Springfield area.

The small number of Indians and the abundant supply of beaver and fertile farmland encouraged the Puritans to settle in Springfield. The Bay Path Trail, a footpath which extended throughout New England and wound through the Springfield area, was an important route for the primitive commerce system. The peaceable Agawam



In 1636, Agawam Indians signed over the land which became Springfield by making their marks on a deed to William Pynchon, Henry Smith, and John Burr.

tribe understood the benefits they would reap by trading beaver, and a cooperative network was established with the white men. In exchange for the beaver skins, the settlers supplied the Indians with mirrors, cloth, hoes, knives, and other implements imported directly from England. The Indians provided the Puritans with advice on cultivating hemp, growing corn in mounds, making dugout canoes, and using as food such things as beaver tail and a brown sugar made from milkweed blossoms.

Laws had been passed in all the New England colonies forbidding the purchase of land from Indians unless licensed by the legislature. Springfield's first settler, William Pynchon, was instructed: "if any of the savages pretend right of inheritance to all or any parts of the lands granted in our patent, we pray you endeavour to purchase their title that we may avoid the least scruple of intrusion." Thus, the Puritans approached the Indians with good intentions but with little understanding of Indian culture—Indians had no concept of land as something that could be owned.

While the Indians did plant some crops, they were primarily hunters and fishermen; they knew that the meadowland flooded occasionally and were willing to trade it to the Puritans. The grant of Longmeadow was part of a deed that covered three parcels of land: the west side of the Connecticut River, the east side from Pecousic Brook north to the Chikuppe River, and the long meddowe (Masacksic) from Pecousic Brook south to Raspberry Brook. Masacksic means the great land or the great meadow. Four fathoms of wampum (beads made of shells), four coats, four hatchets, four hoes, and four knives constituted the purchase price for the Longmeadow portion. The agreement was signed by William Pynchon, Esq.; Henry Smith; John Burr; and eleven Indians, who left their marks of arrows, canoes, and feathers to signify their agreement.

Throughout the years Pynchon maintained a concern for justice and equal treatment for the Indian. A specific condition in the Long Meddowe region provided that "the Indians be not wronged in their crops of pease" (cranberries). The Indians were allowed to continue to hunt and to grow crops on the Long Meddowe, and if their corn was damaged by the settlers' grazing cattle, they were paid full damages.

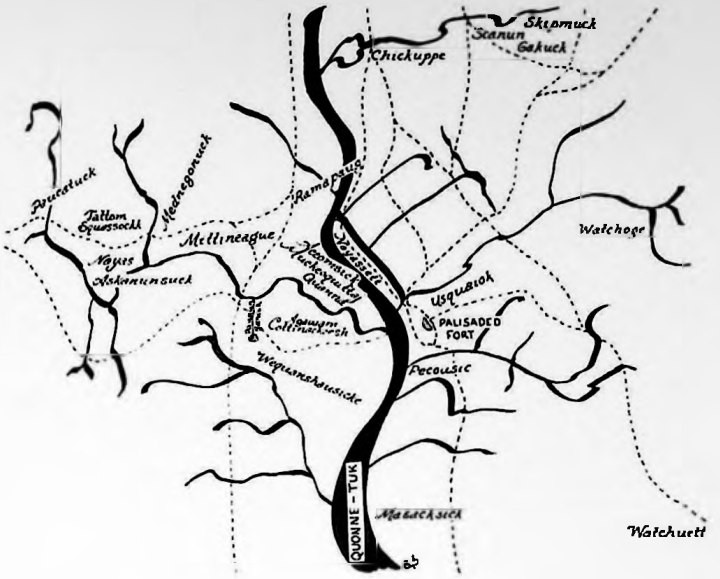
The Indian and the white man lived in a tentative peace in New England until the 1670s when the son of the famous chief Massasoit became chief of the Wampanoag tribe in the area of Rhode Island and southern Massachusetts. Metacomet, whose father also gave him the name of Philip, was called King Philip because of his impressive stature, athletic prowess, and distinctive costume with a long red fox stole and beads. When he became chief, he began to take stock of the Indians' situation. The hunting grounds and game were disappearing, and there was a growing lack of respect among the white settlers for Indian customs. It appeared to Philip that, if the white men were to remain, Indian culture would be destroyed and his race would no longer exist; thus, he took a stand against all white men and launched a New England campaign to destroy them. This very destructive war began in 1675 near Plymouth and spread throughout New England, as Philip encouraged other tribes to join his warpath.

In October 1675 Springfield was left defenseless as John Pynchon, the commander in chief, and his men went to Hadley to ward off an Indian attack. Earlier the Springfield settlers had built a stockade on Long Hill to protect the local Indians from their marauding kin. King Philip's men secretly entered this stockade to incite and enlist

the help of the peaceful Agawams and to hide out for a propitious time to destroy Springfield. An Indian named Toto, who lived with a Windsor, Connecticut family, told of the plans to destroy Springfield, and a messenger was sent to warn the townspeople. However, in a short time the Indians swept down from the stockade, burned thirty-three houses and twenty-five barns, and killed three people. Only fifteen homes remained. The Long Meddowe was not involved in this attack, but its residents must have seen the smoke rising from Springfield as it burned.

The Indian fort and village on Long Hill were situated where the Vincentian Fathers' home is today. In 1922 an attempt was made to restore this important archaeological site; cups, bowls, firepits, and thirteen skeletons were found. One persuasive group, despite specific excavation reports, tried to place the restored fort at the location which is referred to today as King Philip's Stockade on the border of Longmeadow and Springfield. The *Springfield Sunday Republican* of April 16, 1922, reported that the superintendent of parks "isn't much afraid what the historians may say about the authenticity of the site. He has some historical matter somewhere, he believes, that places the fort on Pecousic Hill and if an Indian stockade never existed there before, it's a pretty good idea to put one there now." Thus, we now have a sign designating King Philip's Stockade on Pecousic Hill and an official marker locating the stockade on Long Hill Street in Springfield.

The settlers on the Long Meddowe were not directly affected by King Philip's War until 1676. In the spring of that year eighteen parishioners, including the John Keep family, were traveling under guard from Longmeadow to Springfield to have the infant Jabez Keep baptized. As they approached Springfield, a group of Indians, including formerly friendly Agawams, surprised them with an attack in which John Keep and the infant Jabez were killed. Mrs. Keep was carried off to Hadley where she, too, was killed. This incident, referred to as the Keep massacre, was the closest that the horrors of King Philip's War struck to Longmeadow. However, the people on the meadow were alert to the Indian menace; men and boys over age fifteen were counted as soldiers and trained once a month. No doubt Longmeadow sent men to aide other communities which were fighting Indians.



Map of early Indian trails around Springfield based on remaining traces and documentary evidence. Many followed trails originally made by deer in their seasonal migrations, and they rarely exceeded eighteen inches in width because of the Indian custom of traveling single file.

King Philip's War ended in 1676, but the need for soldiering and the concern about Indians lasted for almost another 100 years during the French and Indian Wars. In 1704 Deerfield, Massachusetts, was raided by Indians, and a ten-year-old boy named Stephen Williams was carried off. He was redeemed from the Indians two years later and eventually became Longmeadow's first minister. His ministry was interrupted from time to time as he left Longmeadow to serve as chaplain to the soldiers fighting in the French and Indian War.

3

Settlement on the Long Meddowe

The flooding of the meadow which motivated the early settlers to seek higher ground has been experienced by many generations. The flood of 1913 brought out these canoeists.

IN MAY 1636 a group of twenty to forty Puritan settlers left Roxbury, Massachusetts, and headed west toward the Connecticut River. The group was led by William Pynchon, a relatively affluent gentleman who had left his home in Springfield, County of Essex, England, six years earlier seeking the challenge of building a new community in the Massachusetts Bay Colony. Not long after Pynchon had settled in Roxbury, three Indians turned up with a rich load of furs of beaver, fox, otter, wolf, and mink. The Indians told of the Connecticut River as a place of fine fishing, good hunting, and fertile land for farming. The Roxbury people sent a scouting party to the area, and that party returned with glowing descriptions of their trip and samples of the hemp they had found growing abundantly by the Connecticut. Later, Pynchon sent John Cable and John Woodcock to the area, and they built a house on the west side of the Connecticut River just above the place where the South End Bridge is today.

When Pynchon and his group arrived at the Connecticut River, they decided to settle on the east side. One story explains this by saying that the cattle Cable and Woodcock had brought had destroyed some of the Indian corn crops on the west side, and it

was thought prudent to put the river between the settlers and the Indians living on the west bank. Another story has it that Pynchon was warned by the Indians about flooding on the Agawam meadows and so decided that the east bank would be better.

By July 1636 William Pynchon, his son-in-law Henry Smith, and John Burr had made an agreement with the Indians and purchased land on both sides of the river. The purchase included "Masacksic," the long meadow which was held as a common area for about eight years before individual grants were made and people began to settle there. The name of Pynchon's community was originally Agawam Plantation, but in 1641 it was changed by vote of a town meeting to Springfield Plantation. The agreement with the Indians reads as follows:

A coppy of a deed whereby the Indians at Springfeild made sale of certain Lands on both sides the great River at Springfeild to William Pynchon Esq & Henry Smith & John Burr, for the Town of Springfeild for ever.
Agaam
alias Agawam: This fifteenth day of July, 1636.
It is agreed between Commucke & Matanchan ancient Indians of Agawam for & in the Name of al the other Indians, & in particular for & in ye Name of Cuttonus the right owner of Agaam & Quana, & in the Name of his mother Kewenusk the Tamasham or wife of Wenawis, & Niarum the wife of Coa, to & with William Pynchon Henry Smith & John Burr their heires & associates for ever. to trucke & sel al that ground & muckeosquittaj or medow, accomsick viz: on the other side of Quana; & al the ground & muckeosquittaj on the side of Agaam, except Cottinackeesh or ground that is now planted for ten Fatham of Wampam, Ten coates, ten howes, Ten hatchets, & knifes: and also the said ancient Indians with the Consent of the rest, & in particular wth the Conent of Menis & Wrutherna & Napompenam – do trucke & sel to William Pynchon Henry Smith & John Burr, & their Successors for ever, al that ground on the East side of Quinnecticot River called Usquaiok & Nayasset reaching about four or five miles in Length, from the north end of Masaksicke up to Chickuppe River, for four fatham of Wampam, four coates, four howes, four hatchets, four knifes: Also the Said ancient Indians Doe wth the Consent of the other Indians, & in particular wth the Consent of Machetuhood Wenepawin, & Mohemoos trucke & sel the ground & Muckeosquittaj, & grounds adjoyning, called Masaksicke, for four fatham of wampam, four coates, four hathets & four howes, & four knifes,
And the said Pynchon hath in hand paid the said eighteen fatham of Wampam, eighteen coates, 18 hatchets, 18 howes, 18 knifes, to the said Commucke & Matanchan, & doth further condition wth the Sd Indians, that they shal have & enjoy all that Cottinackeesh, or ground that is now planted; And have liberty to take Fish & Deer, ground nuts, walnuts, akornes, & Sasachimmeph or a kind of pease, And also if any of th cattle spoile their corne, to pay as it is worth; & that hogs shal not goe on the side Agaam but in akorne time: Also the said Pynchon doth give to Wrutherna two coates over & above the said Particulars exprssed, & In Witnes hereof the two said Indians & the Rest, doe set to their hands, this prsent 15th day of July, 1636.

The Long Meddowe as it looked in 1933.

Settlement on the Long Meddowe

In 1645 twenty-five allotments of land were made along the river in the long meadow or general field. There is some indication that the occupation of the plots was delayed, for not until November 3, 1646, was Thomas Cooper appointed to "measure out the meadow ground in the Long Meadow." In 1647 a road was completed as far as the original Longmeadow Brook, which flowed into the Connecticut River at a point farther south than it does today. Ensign Benjamin Cooley, who was a skilled weaver; Quartermaster George Colton; and John Keep built the first houses in the long meadow.

The Springfield community of which these men were a part was still somewhat restrictive; no one was allowed to settle in Springfield who was not acceptable to the town. No stranger was allowed to remain in town for more than thirty-one days without permission. Citizens were fined for missing town meetings, and a citizen who was elected to public office had to accept the honor or pay a fine.

The men on the long meadow were active and respected members of the Springfield community. Benjamin Cooley was chosen selectman in 1645 and served at intervals for eighteen years, until 1680. George Colton held the same position for twenty-one years, between 1651 and 1695, as well as having the honor of being three times chosen as a deputy to the Massachusetts General Court at Boston. John Keep served on many juries and was also serving as a selectman when he was killed by Indians in 1676.

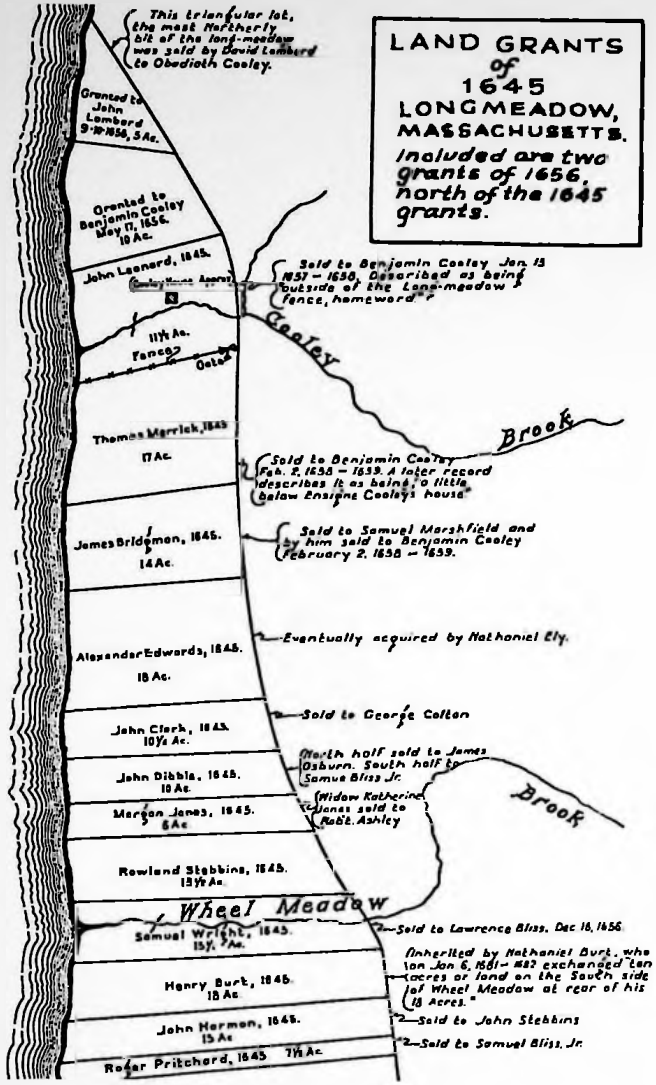
Colton and Cooley seemed often to work as a team; they were given the joint responsibility for seeing that the fences in the long meadow adequately controlled the cattle; they served together on committees to select a new minister for Springfield, to make grants of plantation lands, to lay out a road through Springfield and the long meadow, and to distribute money to the poor. When Colton and Cooley were serving as selectmen, it was found that they had failed to either measure or record their grants within the prescribed six months, and their lands were therefore subject to forfeit. They promptly admitted their liability and reassigned their grants to the town; then, in their capacity as selectmen, they promptly regranted the selfsame lands to themselves.

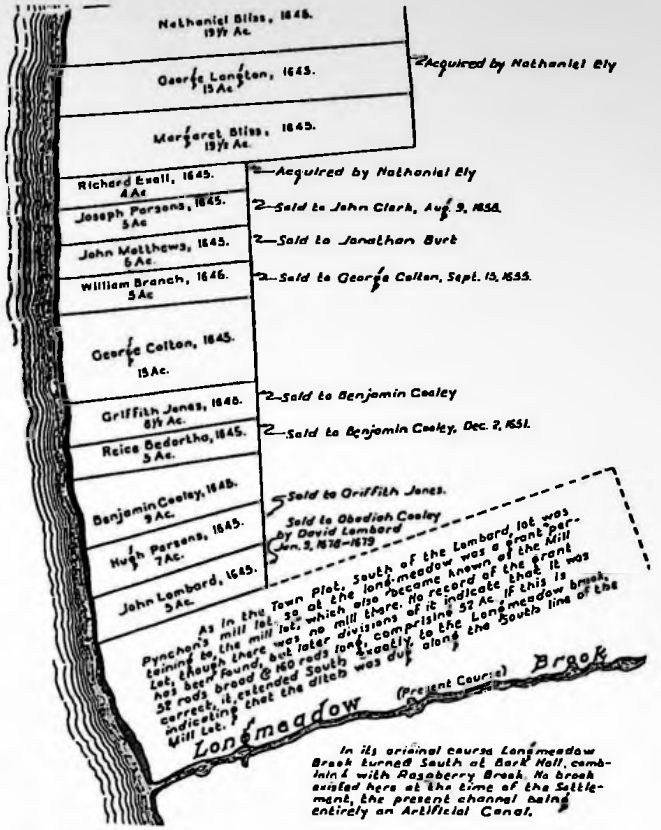
Benjamin Cooley held a lot of land, mostly at the north end of the meadow. Cooley Brook is named after him, for he changed its course in his efforts to have it drain his swampland. The brook had a bridge and tollgate called the Longmeadow Gate, and Cooley was authorized to collect tolls from out-of-towners to pay for the upkeep of the road through the long meadow.

Information about life on the meadow is scant, but it is known that in 1695 the Connecticut River overflowed its banks and flooded the meadow, forcing the settlers to flee their homes. The Cooley family lived at the north end of the meadow near the mouth of Cooley Brook and they fled to Springfield. The Blisses, Burts, and Stebbinses lived farther down the meadow; they secured a boat but, in their haste to escape the rising waters, overturned it and had to crawl out of the water and spend the night in the woods. The Coltons and Keeps left their homes on the meadow and moved northward to the Cooley house. There they spent the night in safety while the Cooleys stayed in Springfield, believing their home had been swept away by the flood.

Because of the flooding, problems controlling their livestock, and the distance from church and school, the residents of the long meadow petitioned the town of Springfield that they be allowed to move out of the meadow onto higher ground to the east. Their petition read as follows:

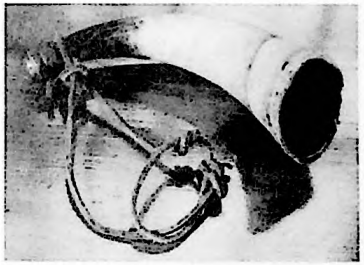
January the 29th 1702/3 We the Inhabitants of Longmeadow in Springfield do make our Address to this Town of Springfield as followeth we would declare our difficult Circumstances
1st Our living in a general Field we are thereby forced to be at great charge to make Lanes or outlets for our Creatures.
2d By reason of Floods our lives have been in great Danger our Housing much damnified and many of our Cattle have been lost.
3d A third Difficulty which we shall mention in the last Place (not that we count it a matter of least Concernment but because in Reason it will be helpt in the last Place) and that is our living remote from the Publick Worship of God as to hearing the word preached and also our Children are thereby deprived of the Benefit of Instruction by the School Master in the Town.

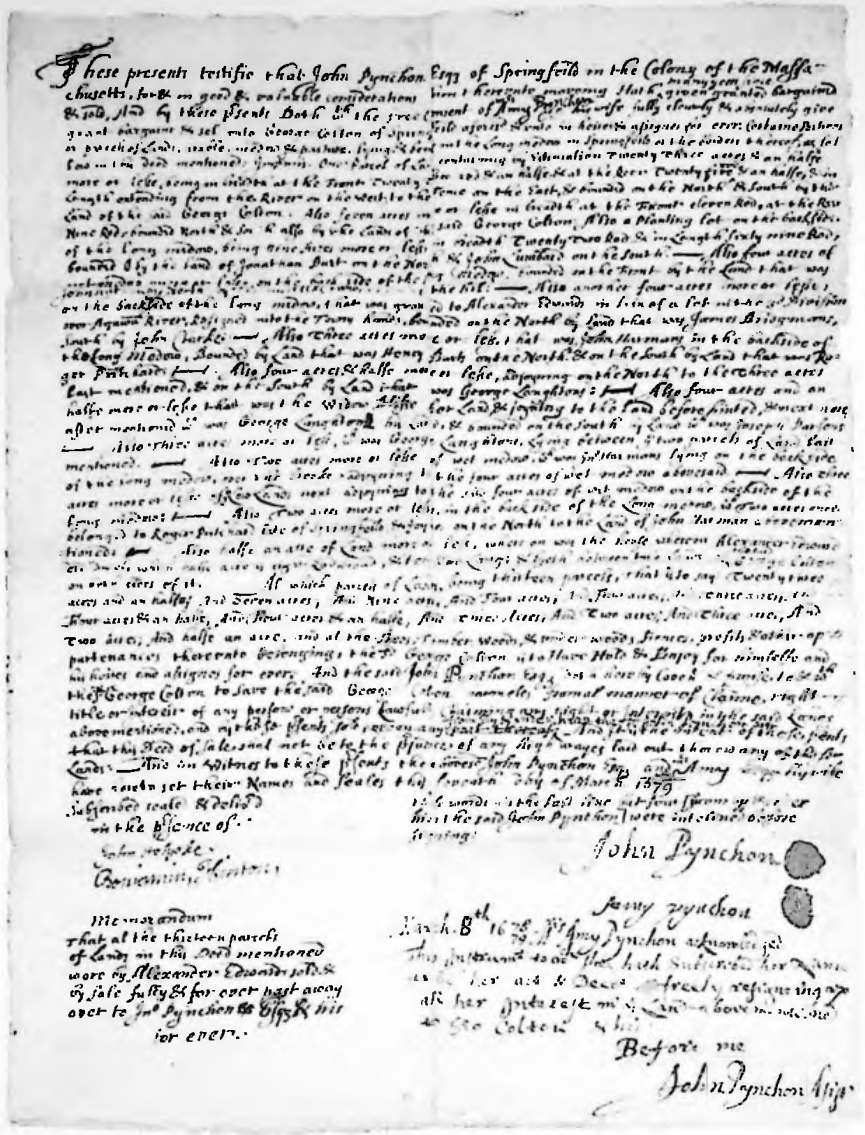




Two halves of Land Grant map drawn by Harry Andrew Wright in 1940.

Settlement on the Long Meddowe





Now for our Relief we do suppose our best way is to move out of the General Field and build on the Hill against Longmeadow and we have been at the pains to measure what Lands we thought might be convenient to build on for Three score or four score Lots and be twenty Rods in breadth and about eighty Rods in Length. We therefore do desire the Town to grant us said Lands as home lots to build on Also that the Town would order those Lands to be laid out and modled in such way and manner as may be most comfortable for Setling thereon. We desire not this that the Town by granting this our desire should be brought into any snare or inconvenience hereafter but for our own Benefit and Comfort and our Posterity after us.

The petition was granted, and a committee of three was appointed to see to the "modelling and ordering" of these lands. A "Country Road," later Longmeadow Street, was constructed 20 rods wide and 4 miles long running from Pecousic Brook to Enfield bounds. Homesites were usually laid out as eastward extensions of the boundaries of properties assigned in the meadow.

Evidently some encouragement was needed to get the meadow settlers to move up onto the hill. In an agreement signed on November 29, 1703, five Colton men released some of their property to be used for building roads from the meadow to the hill. The agreement further pledged that its signers would each "build a Good Dwelling House on the Hill within five years" or would pay a forfeiture of ten pounds to those who had gone up before them. The agreement was signed by four Burts, four Coltons, Thomas Hail, and Samuel Keep.

By 1709 the move to the hill was complete. There is some argument as to whether the settlers actually moved whole houses from the meadow to the hill. There are houses in town today with beams that show dates earlier than 1703, but it is a matter of debate whether the houses were moved from the meadow or whether just individual pieces of houses made it up the hill.

1678 deed from John Pynchon to George Colton for "arable medow & pasture lying & being in the Long medow in Springfield."

4

The Early Years

Warrant dated January 20, 1758 calling Longmeadow freeholders to a precinct meeting.

The Precinct

IN THEIR PETITION to leave the meadow and build their homes upon the hill the people of Longmeadow cited the difficulty of "living remote from the Publick Worship of God." As soon as the issue of moving was resolved, they began seeking permission to establish their own church. A petition to this effect was presented at the Springfield town meeting of March 14, 1704, and was put "on file." The petition was read again at the town meeting of May 7, 1705, and again was put on file. Finally, at the town meeting of March 12, 1706, the petition was read and acted upon; it was "disaccepted for the present."

Seven years went by before the Longmeadow people took up the subject again, and this time they decided to bypass Springfield and go directly to the General Court at Boston. The law of the Colony forbade the organization of a second church unless the need for it could be proved to the satisfaction of the legislature. In the case of Longmeadow the need was clearly established, and the Court handed down this decision signed on February 17, 1713:

At a session of the Great and General Courtt or Assembly, held att Boston February 10, 1713. It being Represented that the Petitioners Inhabitants of thatt Partt of the Town of Springfield Commonly Called Longmeadow, (altho not fully the Number of Forty Families) are of Good and Sufficientt ability to Maintain a Minister; and oftentimes Cannot with any Conveniency attend the Publick Worship at the Meeting Hous that now is in the said Town by reason of their great Distance from it.
Ordered, that the Prayer of the Petition be Granted, and that a Separate Precinct for the Gospel ministry be and heerby is set of and established in the said Town of Springfield accordingly with all usual powers and privileges: To be bounded Northerly by a Line to be Drawn from the mouth of Pecousic Brook so Called where it falls into Conecticutt River, to the province's Land paralel to the Line of the Southern bounds of the said Town of Springfield, Westerly by Conecticut River, Southerly by the Town of Endfield, and Easterly by the province's Land Provided that the Inhabitants and Interested in the said precinct shal pay to the maintainence of the Ministry in the other partt of the Town as formerly until they are provided with a Learned Orthodox Minister and agree to Raise and pay the sum of Fifty pounds at leastt annualy for his Suport.

Longmeadow maintained its precinct status for seventy years before it became an independent town. The precinct officers were a clerk, a treasurer, a prudential committee of three, and three assessors. Precinct meetings varied in frequency and length from year to year and were concerned with four major interests: the annual election of officers; appropriations for the next year; the fixing of prices of the various grains in which a part of the minister's salary would be paid; and the building and care of the meetinghouse.

As a precinct, Longmeadow managed its church and school affairs and some other matters, but the people of the precinct also gathered in the town meetings of the greater community of Springfield. Civic chores assigned at town meetings consisted of such things as serving on juries, checking boundaries and fences, laying out roads, and repairing bridges. Longmeadow men were not ones who shied away from public service. Throughout the precinct period there was always at least one Bliss, Burt, Colton, Cooley, Ely, or Stebbins on the board of selectmen of Springfield, and sometimes there were two or three.

The first tasks of the newly formed precinct were to find a "Learned Orthodox Minister" and to build a meetinghouse. On March 7, 1715, the parish voted to call the Reverend Stephen Williams. He had preached his first sermon at Longmeadow as a candidate on November 4, 1714, when only twenty-one years old. A Harvard graduate, he had taught school in Hadley for a year until receiving his master's degree in 1714.

The meetinghouse was the center of both religious and political life; church services and precinct meetings were held there. On April 26, 1714, Longmeadow residents voted that "the meetinghous should be built thurty eight foots square if the timber that is allready gotten alow itt or if the timber be too scantt to make it sumthing less." By October 1716 the meetinghouse was sufficiently complete so that Stephen Williams could be ordained in it and begin to gather his congregation there.

The construction, finishing, and repairing of the meetinghouse seemed to go on interminably. The people changed their minds and votes on the subject from week to week and from month to month. A committee would be chosen and given definite instructions regarding some point of repair or refurbishing, and then the next meeting would order a cessation of activity. The building was a simple unpainted clapboard structure with a shingled hip roof, at the center of which was a bell chamber in the form of a simple turret. Although the meetinghouse was brought into use in 1716, it was thirteen years before the town voted that the walls be lathed and plastered. This first meetinghouse never had a stove; on winter days the parson preached wearing his cloak and heavy woolen mittens. The congregation sat on benches that were used until the late 1740s, when they began to be replaced with pews.

A committee of nine men had the tricky job of arranging the

seating of the worshipers in accordance with their importance and worth in the community. The committee would present its plan for seating at a precinct meeting which would then vote to accept or reject it. At times, the committee was told to go back and try again. This custom, called "dignifying the meetinghouse," started in 1717 and continued well beyond 1783.

The meetinghouse was located on the Green, slightly south and to the west of where the memorial boulder is today. The Green at this time was very sandy, and there was a continual problem with sand eroding and exposing the underpinnings of the building. After several votes to repair the meetinghouse, in 1743 the precinct finally decided to pave around it.

For many years it was the beating of a drum that called Longmeadow people to church. The records of precinct meetings tell who was paid to go up and down the street beating the drum each Sunday. In 1728 the precinct first started voting on the question of purchasing a bell for the bell tower on the meetinghouse; however, this was not actually accomplished until 1744.

In 1764 the precinct began to seriously consider building a new meetinghouse. After a few false starts and a vote, later rescinded, to build it in brick, the second meetinghouse was built on the Green just to the north of the first one. It was built during 1767 and 1768, and on June 12, 1769, the first meetinghouse was torn down. This second meetinghouse forms the framework of the present First Church of Christ in Longmeadow, although it has since been moved off the Green and undergone three major remodelings.

Longmeadow endured a smallpox epidemic in 1760-61. For a year or two earlier the number of cases in Springfield had been on the increase, especially among the garrison soldiers. This was thirty years before British physician Edward Jenner invented vaccination, but in 1718 Lady Mary Wortley Montagu had introduced the method of inoculation using a small amount of matter from smallpox sores. The hope was to induce a mild case of smallpox that would provide lifetime immunity; but it was a dangerous approach to dealing with the disease, and while it worked in some cases, it caused death in others. Debate over inoculation raged in Springfield and Longmeadow. In Springfield a motion for an inoculation hospital was voted down, and the practice was firmly forbidden. A pesthouse was built, and Dr. John Dickinson came by invitation from Middletown, Connecticut, to bear the burden of medical responsibility.

Stephen Williams's diary reports that in November 1760 a man had come from the army and lodged at the home of Samuel Bliss. The man had smallpox and spread the disease before he was taken to the pesthouse. In Longmeadow there was a greater willingness to accept the risk of inoculation, and a hospital was established at Matthews's swamp for those who voluntarily contracted the disease. In April 1761 Joseph Chapin's wife was found to have smallpox, and shortly thereafter the town was in an uproar because the Chapin children were attending school after having been exposed to it. By early May several of them had come down with the disease.

The matter of elevating Longmeadow from its precinct status to that of an independent township first came up in 1741. A committee was appointed to look into the desirability of the change. Their report, which advised against it, was accepted by the precinct, and the matter rested for thirty years. In 1772 the subject was brought up again; a petition was presented to Springfield, and on January 17, 1774, Springfield voted to approve the separation subject to the condition that Longmeadow "take their proportionable share of the poor in Town" and their share of the town treasury, less £400 needed for building bridges. Longmeadow agreed to the conditions and chose a committee to present the request to the Massachusetts General Court.

The Revolutionary War intervened at this point. In April 1775 Stephen Williams wrote, "Young men, Burts, Hales, Coltons, Keeps, Elys, Cooleys, Blisses, Stebbinses, Whites, Ashbys, etc. on the quick step off to assist our brethren at Lexington, and, as their colors disappear, we met in the Meeting House for prayers." All thought of a separate town government for Longmeadow seems to have been held in abeyance until after the war.

Longmeadow was at its largest in terms of land area when it became a precinct. With about thirty-five square miles, there was roughly one square mile of land per family at this time; seventy years

later, when the precinct became a town, it had already lost a good portion of its land in the formation of the precinct of Wilbraham. There were two sawmills in town – one at Pecousic Brook and one farther south located where today's Mill Road is, just north of the Longmeadow Country Club. At least a dozen of today's Longmeadow Street houses date back to the precinct period.

The separation of church and state in Longmeadow is an interesting study. The town and the First Church of Christ were inextricably interwoven from the beginnings of the precinct and the establishment of the church here. The precinct was the financial arm of the church; the church selected its minister, but the precinct paid him. Separation came gradually over a very long period of time, and even today vestiges of the precinct remain. When the First Church of Christ finishes its annual meeting, it adjourns and opens up the precinct meeting. Legal technicalities have made it necessary to continue the precinct as owner of a small strip of land near the Longmeadow Cemetery. In practice the officers of First Church handle this business, but in theory every voter in town has the right to attend and vote at these vestigial precinct meetings.

Stephen Williams

AS THE FIRST Longmeadow minister, Stephen Williams was a towering presence who provided a shaping influence during the developmental years of the precinct. Diaries that he kept from 1715 until his death in 1782 provide a comprehensive record of events in those formative years in the settlement.

Williams is an important historical figure in Longmeadow, but he was famous to earlier generations of young Americans as the hero of an adventure story. *The Boy Captive of Old Deerfield* told of the Deerfield massacre in 1704 and of the capture by Indians of ten-year-old Stephen Williams. His mother and three of her young children were murdered in the massacre; his father and the rest of the family marched with their Indian captors to Canada. The freedom of his father and brothers was soon secured by a ransom payment,

but Stephen lived for two years in captivity before his release could be negotiated. A sister, Eunice, lived the rest of her life as an Indian.

Stephen Williams was a young Harvard graduate when he was called to serve the new precinct of Longmeadow. He was ordained on October 17, 1716, and proceeded to build a parsonage located where the Community House now stands. Its spacious size and stateliness was a matter of controversy; some of the congregation thought the house too pretentious and worldly for the new young bachelor minister. In his journal he noted this displeasure and prayed that his neighbors be forgiven and that he "carry it becomingly." He was married to Abigail Davenport two years later, and the eight children of the couple might have satisfied the parish as to the need for a large home.

As a theologian, Stephen Williams appeared to be a conservative who sought peace and maintained the status quo among the ministry of the Connecticut River Valley. He initially dealt with such matters as hymn singing and scripture reading during the worship service. He advocated the singing of psalms in the meetinghouse; most churches disapproved of this practice because of the strictures of eighteenth-century Puritanism. It took the Reverend Mr. Williams many years to convince his congregation that music held an enriching place in the church.

Stephen Williams was concerned about intemperance, cheating, and adultery among the people of his times, and in 1728 he drew up a Covenant of Reformation which he urged all his congregation to sign. In 1734 a religious revival called the Great Awakening began. One of its leaders was the famous Jonathan Edwards of Northampton. The entry in Stephen Williams's diary for July 8, 1740, is the only known eyewitness account of Edwards's famous "fire-and-brimstone" sermon delivered in Enfield; the sermon brought fervent revivalism to the Connecticut River Valley. Williams's reaction to the Great Awakening and to the endless pamphlet wars that debated religious issues was one of skepticism and amazement at the emotional excesses which the Great Awakening triggered.

In 1745 and again in 1755 Williams left Longmeadow to serve as a chaplain to troops fighting the French and Indians. On his return

1716 deed from Nathaniel Burt to Stephen Williams.

he demanded and eventually received full salary for the months he was away. He felt that the congregation could afford the payment because of the "many new shiney shoe buckles and fine silk scarves at the assembly."

Stephen Williams had an affection for the Indians, in spite of his early captivity. The Williams household usually had one or two Indian children living in Longmeadow while attending the school on the Green. His sister Eunice and her Indian family paid several visits to Longmeadow, providing excitement for the community by camping out Indian style in the orchard behind the parsonage.

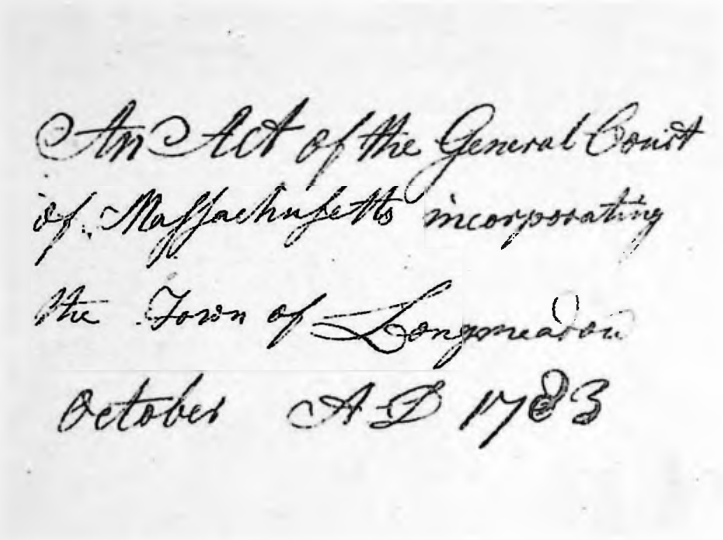
After the death of his wife in 1766, Stephen Williams married the widow Sarah Burt, abiding by the Puritan covenant which frowned on unmarried adults. The aging minister was disturbed by the approaching troubles of the Revolutionary War. He wrote in his diary of the "arbitrary and tyrannical measures" of the Crown. He prayed with the local military company, and had a grandson in the army. When he read the Declaration of Independence publicly, however, he noted in his diary that he was required to do so. Other diary entries indicate both his concern as a man of God about the calamity of a civil war and his sensitivity to the fact that his people disagreed with his conservatism. With the surrender of Cornwallis at Yorktown, he rejoiced with the people at the end of the conflict.

The Reverend Stephen Williams was an active member of the Longmeadow community until his death on June 10, 1782, in the ninetieth year of his life and the sixty-sixth of his ministry. The fact that the Longmeadow congregation remained intact throughout the turbulent eighteenth century in New England can be explained in great part by the force of his personality and by the respect he engendered in his parishioners. Transcriptions of his diaries, available for study in Storrs Library, provide a record of Longmeadow life, the colonial wars, and the human emotions of a beloved minister and family man.

Gravestone rubbing.

5

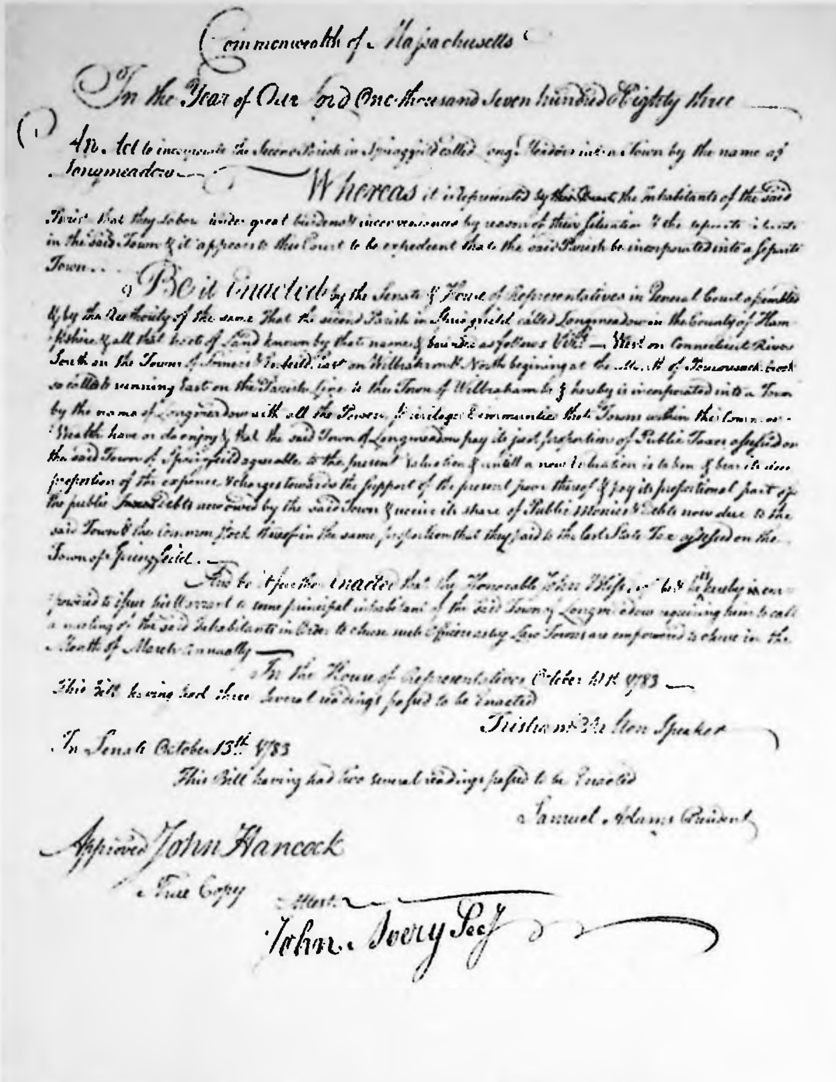
Life and Livelihood in Longmeadow


An Act of the General Court
of Massachusetts incorporating
the Town of Longmeadow
October AD 1783

The Town

WHEN THE GENERAL COURT met in Boston only one month after the Treaty of Paris officially ended the Revolutionary War, it acted on the incorporation of the new town of Longmeadow. "Whereas it is represented by the inhabitants of the Said Parish, that they labour under great burdens and inconveniences . . . it appears to this Court to be expedient that the Said Parish be incorporated into a Separate town." The bill was signed into law on October 17, 1783, and Longmeadow achieved the independent status that had been evolving since the meadow settlement started 140 years earlier. As the first town created after the Revolution, Longmeadow became the eldest daughter of the independent Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

The nation was at its beginning. The Constitution was yet unwritten, and several years of trial and error would precede the formation of a United States government. Stephen Williams, Longmeadow's guiding pastor for sixty-six years, had just died, and the church would not have a permanent pastor until Richard Salter Storrs came in 1785. Unlike the nation and the church, Longmeadow


Commonwealth of Massachusetts

In the Year of Our Lord One thousand Seven hundred and Eighty three

An Act to incorporate the Second Parish in Springfield called Longmeadow into a Town by the name of Longmeadow — Whereas [illegible]

Be it enacted by the Senate & House of Representatives in General Court assembled [illegible]

In the House of Representatives October 11th 1783 — This Bill having had three several readings passed to be Enacted

Tristram Dalton Speaker

In Senate October 13th 1783

This Bill having had two several readings passed to be Enacted

Samuel Adams President

Approved John Hancock

A True Copy Attest. John Avery Secy

Town charter.

was ready for the change of government. The town held its first town meeting in November 1783 and elected three selectmen, a clerk, and all the other officials needed to run a town.

The town was suffering the same hard times that plagued the rest of the country. Continental currency was worthless; creditors were seeking legal settlement of debts that could not be paid. Some townspeople heard the call of Daniel Shays to shut down the courts in order to prevent their function of debt collection. Shays's Rebellion in 1786 found townspeople on both sides of the insurrection. The names of Alpheus Colton and John Bliss were linked with the protesters' march on Springfield, and Nathaniel Ely and Gideon Burt defended the stores at the Springfield Armory.

There was the feeling for a time that the name of Longmeadow was not imposing enough for the new town. Longmeadow seemed to be simply a description of a place, and not a proper town name. A letter from Nathaniel Ely to his son in the General Court in 1783 voices his preference for the name of South Springfield. In 1812 Hampden County was created from the southern part of Hampshire County, and Longmeadow voted to take a new name. The town meeting voted to have the name changed to Lisbon, but it was discovered that a Lisbon, Massachusetts, already existed. The town meeting appointed a committee to suggest another name, but no report of their findings is recorded. The last attempt to adopt a new name was in 1825, when the town meeting of May 2 voted to change the name to South Springfield. The vote was rescinded at another meeting two weeks later, and the name and town of Longmeadow still thrive.

Rich farmland provided a good life for the families of Longmeadow. Each household was equipped to provide many of its own needs, and many also offered products and services for neighbors. Coopers, tailors, and tanners worked from their homes. The town had no lawyers, but it did have many men with the knowledge and trusted judgment to draw wills and offer legal advice. Shad and salmon fishing were a substantial industry until dams on the river depleted the supply of fish. Substantial homes were added one by one to the houses along the Green.

The town granted forty-year leases to shopkeepers on the Green. In order to control wind erosion on the Green, Capt. David Burt was given permission to implement a program of enrichment and cultivation of the center portion, creating the green lawn we know now. As the Green began to take on the character of the park it is today, the shops came to be viewed as eyesores. The shopkeepers were evicted at the expiration of their leases, except for shops of a wheelwright and a blacksmith, located where First Church is today. Those shopkeepers gained title to their land by staying past the forty-year lease, and the land had to be purchased so that the church could be moved in 1874.

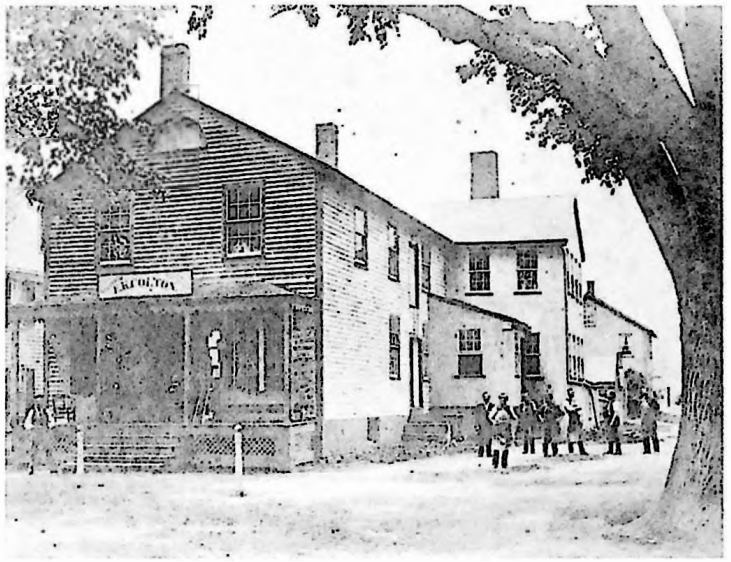
The brooks of Longmeadow welcomed some early industry. Brickyards were located near Wheelmeadow Brook, and a pistol factory was on Pecousic Brook. Mill Road had a gristmill, and cider mills and distilleries were plentiful until the temperance movement limited their business. Spectacles and thimbles from several Longmeadow makers supplied consumers from afar, and buttons were produced by the Newell Brothers.

The East Longmeadow part of the town was settled slowly by both Longmeadow families and others. It had carried the name of Poverty Hill because the soil was thought to be too poor to provide a livelihood, but careful farming was able to provide good harvests. The two settlements had close ties. Villagers worshiped together until East Longmeadow built a church in the 1820s; town meetings were joint gatherings, and came to be held alternately in the meetinghouses of the two settlements. The early advantage of wealth, population, and property belonged to the west of Longmeadow, but expanding agriculture and the growth of the sandstone quarries in East Longmeadow gave that village a greater population by 1850.

Protestants of all creeds worshiped together in First Church. Town meeting records show appropriations by the town to support the church well into the nineteenth century. Baptist and Methodist-Episcopal churches developed in East Longmeadow, but Longmeadow had only one house of worship until a Catholic chapel opened in 1868.

Life and Livelihood

1880 photograph of the Keep family farm house which still stands at the corner of Longmeadow Street and Maple Road.



Colton's general store in 1885 housed the post office and a manufacturing plant in the rear. It was next door to the White Tavern.

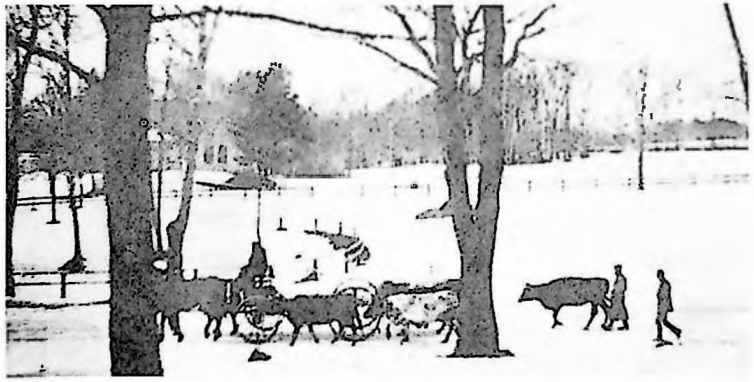
These selections from the Keep letter collection of the Longmeadow Historical Society give the flavor of everyday life in nineteenth-century Longmeadow. The family lived in the home that today is 909 Longmeadow Street. The letters are written to Nathan, the eldest son, from his parents, Samuel and Anne Keep; their children Lucy, Eunice, Samuel, Jr., and John; and a cousin, Sophia Warriner.

From Sophia, September 21, 1825:

Attended church Sabbath day and Evening and heard the Rev. Mr. Eaton for the first time. After meeting accompanied by your sisters and Mr. F. Burt returned home and was favoured with an introduction to Mr. Cooley who called with E. Ely Esq. The latter has "taken quite a shine" to Lucy, but he has a rival in Mr. Burt who gallanted her home from Mr. Luther Colton's Monday Eve.

From Samuel, November 12, 1826:

John don't say much about having an education since he received your letter. What he thinks I do not know. We have been trying to get a grammar school. We don't succeed very well in getting a sufficient number of scholars . . . . If we don't have a school here we must send John out of town somewhere.



Beef on the hoof in Longmeadow in 1890.

From Eunice, January 2, 1827:

Longmeadow and its inhabitants remain pretty much as they have done for some years: ignorant, quite self sufficient, always minding about other people's business.

From Samuel, Sr., March 9, 1827:

We had a meeting yesterday to choose a representative to Congress. The Hon. Samuel Lathrop had all the votes except 7. After that meeting was closed there was a parish meeting to see if they would do anything about altering the meetinghouse so as to make it in modern style.

From Eunice, March 20, 1827:

I think that our village is very pleasant now that the snow has all gone and the grass begins to make its appearance—the trees and shrubs are putting forth their buds and all things look cheerful like spring . . . . S. Booth has had a broken ankle of late but it has got most well. He employed the new doctor to [treat] it and don't know as you knew that we had one here. His father is said to be wealthy. You know that goes a great way with some. His name is Bliss.

From Samuel, Sr., June 3, 1827:

We have got along very well at present. We have hired a young man of 19 for $9.50 per month. He does very well. At present we have ploughed up 4 acres of ground in the new pasture and planted it to corn. Have cleared up some of the hedge. The more I work on that land the better I like it. It is still capable of greater improvement. We have planted six acres, sewed one acre to hemp, fixed one for tobacco. The prospect is good for grapes, also apples aplenty—no peaches.

From John, August 20, 1827:

I called at the store a few days before Dr. Bliss left and found him there. Soon Mrs. Maria Cooley came in and inquired for tooth

brushes. Are they stiff said she. If they are not, I do not wish for them. Upon this the Doctor stepped up and said that a limber brush was much the best. Mrs. Cooley said she had consulted Dentists who told her to use a stiff brush. He said that a stiff brush injured the enamel of the tooth. She asked him why he did not take better care of his teeth.

From Lucy, December 28, 1827:

Williams says the dress you gave me is quite a dashing thing. He has been to Springfield and purchased one for Flavia Colton as near like that as he could.

From John, April 17, 1828:

We want rain very much. We do not know when we shall be able to pay for that cloth. It is impossible to sell anything. Our tobacco is not sold, not our horses. Father feels almost discouraged. He has concluded not to hire this summer.

From Samuel, Sr., April 22, 1828:

We have not had any physician for there is none in town that we think knows more than we do about it.

From Solomon, May 2, 1828:

True, money is very scarce, but provisions are very cheap and if people are industrious they can live here.

From Samuel, Jr., July 22, 1828:

I arrived in this village about 11 o'clock on Saturday evening after a long and unpleasant ride having been pounded and squeezed and jolted for 22½ hours in an old carriage which broke down twice and was near being upset several times, and you can imagine that my naturally bad disposition was some worse than usual . . . On Sunday morning I rode with mother to church and heard the Rev. Baxter Dickinson preach a sermon of about 2 hours length and saw all the Pretty Lasses!!!

From Samuel, Sr., July 5, 1829:

You can not know the anxiety Parents have for their children until you become a Parent, especially when they are grown to years of discretion and are scattered from them.

The Centennial Celebration

IN THE hundreds of years that the Longmeadow Green has been the center of community life, the most singular and significant happening on the Green was surely the day-long centennial celebration of 1883. The day was the culmination of more than a year of planning, beginning with the establishment of a committee of inquiry at the 1882 town meeting. The town meeting of the spring of 1883 voted to appropriate "one tenth of one per cent of the grand list" to celebrate the centennial of the town. This $900 appropriation was the maximum amount allowed by state law for such a purpose.

Requests were made from the pulpits of the town for the names of friends and other nonresidents with an interest in the town. All were offered an invitation to the festival day of October 17, 1883.

To all Sons and Daughters of Longmeadow, our common Mother sendeth loving greeting: cordially inviting you her well-beloved children . . . joyously to gather yourselves on the seventeenth day of the tenth month, under the ancestral Elms of the Olden Green, To Celebrate with her in song and thanksgiving and historic reminiscence, and with all fitting fellowships of heart and of hand, Her One Hundredth Birthday.

Plans continued apace in Longmeadow, preparing the program of celebration and planning for the crowds of revelers. The centennial would be celebrated with a full day of activities under a tent on the Green: hymns, scripture readings, prayers, and speeches. Descendants of the Williams, Storrs, Colton, and Keep families were among the invited speakers. Dinner would be served in a huge tent

Above: Group on the Green circa 1885.

Above right. The T.T.T. Club in June, 1884. This service organization's motto, "Ten Times one is Ten," was meant to encourage each member to recruit ten volunteers.

Right: The Cordis family coach in 1890.

on the Green; 400 pounds of meat, 4,000 rolls, 50 pounds of coffee, and 70 pounds of sugar were collected for the feast. Longmeadow families donated 300 loaf cakes from their home ovens.

This is how the story of the centennial day in the centennial book begins.

The morning of the long-anticipated day broke with roseate hues and a crisp and frosty air, upon a village green already prepared for the day's festivities. Upon the exact site of the old Meeting House, and just in front of the present one remodelled upon the ancient frame, had been pitched a triple masted audience marquee, with a smaller one adjoining it for collation conveniences.

Activity on the Green increased; happy children, red-coated musicians, and busy workers gathered. A steady flow of omnibuses and private carriages, bicycles and railroad arrivals increased the excitement of the day.

"The occasion was pure New England," stated the *Springfield Republican*. Two thousand visitors came together under the tent. Prayer, hymns, and scripture readings opened the festivities; then John W. Harding, First Church pastor, spoke of the history of the town with "an address which, though covering two hours, was so excellent in material, so judiciously wrought, so artistically broken at the right points by freshening humor . . . that all were delighted to the very end."

A sumptuous midday dinner followed, served by town residents to the accompaniment of band music. A stirring reading by William E. Boies of his original "Centennial Poem" gave way to a flourish of witty, nostalgic after-dinner speeches. As the day waned, the doxology was sung and a benediction given. All joined hands for the singing of "Auld Lang Syne." The *Republican* concluded: "Longmeadow, from first to last did herself thorough credit."

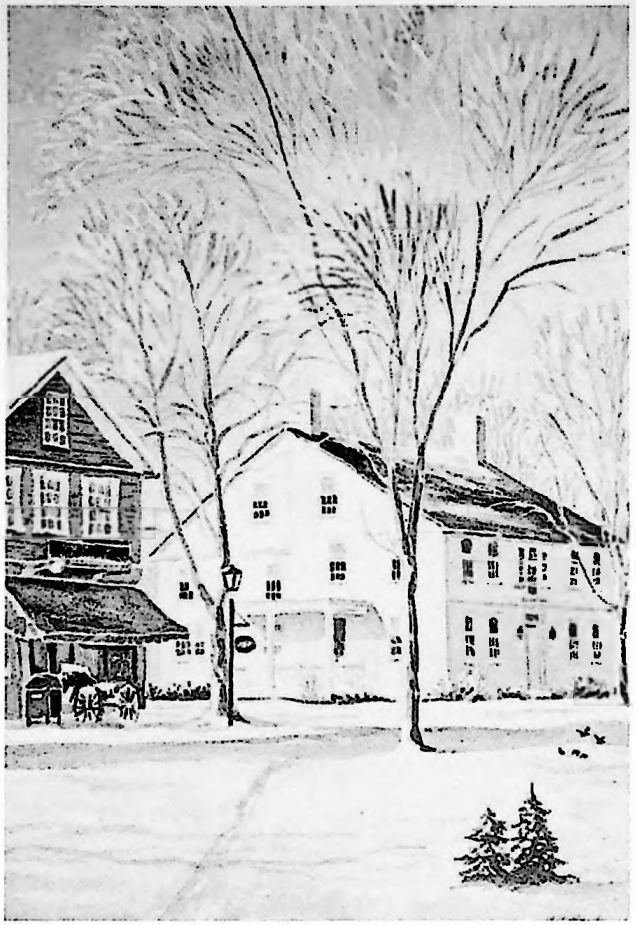
Several weeks after that October day, the centennial committee met and took the action that insured a permanent record of the events of the long-ago celebration. The committee voted that unexpended funds be used to prepare "an edition of the proceedings properly bound and illustrated, and sufficient in number to supply one copy to each family in town and to each invited speaker." The town was prohibited by law from exceeding the centennial appropriation, so private donations were offered to allow the publication of a 400-page book containing the proceedings of the centennial, 200 pages of town history, and a 100-page genealogical appendix. The book was a treasured item in many home libraries in the bicentennial year.

These echoes from centennial chroniclers are preserved because of the stewardship of earlier citizens. Rev. William Leete hoped that we would "preserve as best we can, that ancient and honorable name . . . which has crowned this good old town through all her departed years." Rev. John Harding envisioned "these sweet homes, the church, the school, cherished still, we shall transmit them to our children and they will hand them down to theirs," and prayed that "when our children's children shall gather here a hundred years to come, from the upper air . . . we may behold their grander prosperity and their brighter joy!" And centennial poet William Boies mused that century ago:

I know not what the years will bring
Of Glad news or alarm,
But pray that the new century
Break not the olden charm.

The White Tavern

HOUSES ON THE Longmeadow Green are holders of front row center seats, looking out at the town as they do and taking in the passing scene. The house at 766 Longmeadow Street has had such a vantage point since 1713. One of the three oldest houses in Longmeadow, it was erected by Samuel Bliss II with built-in memories. Marks on mortices of beams in its basement indicate that the house had been taken down and rebuilt, leading to the assumption that some parts of the house originally stood in the meadow. The front and back of the house were built at different times, as can be seen from a seam on the sides.



Watercolor of the White Tavern painted in 1962 by Arthur A. Hart.

The Bliss family was among the earliest settlers on the meadow, and Samuel Bliss II was among the first to move to "the hill." In its early years the house echoed to the sounds of children. When Samuel Bliss II died at the age of 101 he could claim in children, grandchildren, great- and great-great-grandchildren a total of 168 descendants. According to the deed to its 1811 sale, the house was used as a tavern, and Seth Steel, the buyer, was listed as "tavern keeper." In those days a tavern was thought to be so necessary as a resting place for travelers that a Massachusetts law fined any town that failed to have a public house. Stagecoaches now stopped at the house, and there must have been lively conversations at table or fireside between strangers and local farmers. Besides accommodating visitors, the tavern with its location near the meetinghouse on the Green provided a source of hot coals to restock ladies' footwarmers during the long Sunday meetings. Later residents have worked to remove bayonet marks in the walls and ceiling of the room where militiamen relaxed after annual training exercises.

When William White was the tavernkeeper the "Old White Tavern" was proclaimed by a sign adorned with a painted eagle and hung from a huge elm tree in the southeast corner of the front yard. Next the sign would indicate the Colton Tavern and even later the Allen Guest House as owners changed.

The house was typical of tavern design of the time. Three dining rooms on the north side had folding doors that opened to turn them into one large room. The second-floor rooms could be thrown open across the front by lifting hinged floor-to-ceiling partitions that were then hooked to the ceiling. The third story, the "sky parlor," stretched north to south across the whole length of the house with an arched ceiling. It served as an occasional dining room and dance hall. Balls and Thanksgiving gatherings were held in the room known today as the only ballroom in Longmeadow. When a fire damaged the district schoolhouse in the 1850s, school was held in the ballroom.

The passing of the stagecoach era brought the end of the tavern. The house eventually became a boardinghouse for workers in the Newell Brothers Button Shop, which was in part of the store building across Chandler Place. During this century the house has been a

The White Tavern, now gold, in 1983

teahouse and a medical office as well as a home.

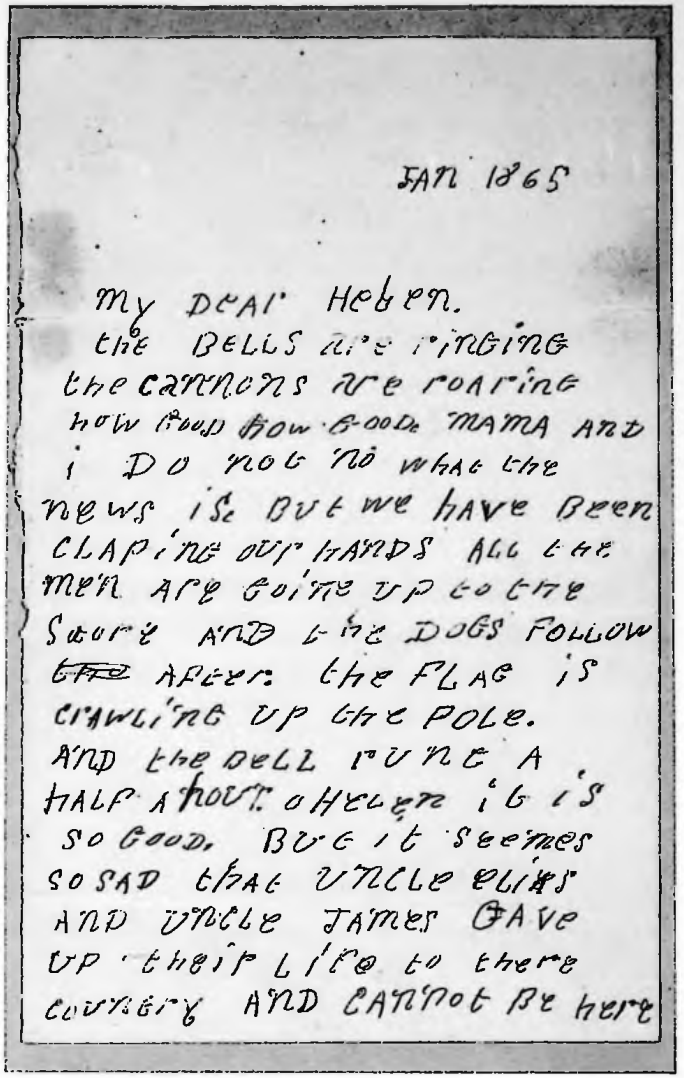
The White Tavern has indeed been witness to many lives and events. It has undergone changes and played different roles. It has seen the very beginning of Longmeadow's history as a precinct of Springfield and now looks to the beginning of a third century in the town of Longmeadow.

Annie Bradford Coomes (who became Mrs. Theodore Woolsey Leete in 1883) lived in this house. Near the end of the Civil War, when she was about eight years old, she wrote her sister as follows:

My dear Helen:

the Bells are ringing the cannons are roaring how good how good, mama and i do not no what the news is, but we have been claping our hands all the men are going up to the store and the dogs follow after: the flag is crawling up the pole. And the Bell rung a half a hour. O Helen it is so good. But it seemes so sad that Uncle Elias and Uncle James gave up their life to ther country and cannot be here to rejoice with us. Katie Newell has got a nother sister. It is a week old today. i went to here a black minister last Sunday evening and he said he thot that God would not permit this people to enslave the Blas he said he thout the Blaks are as good as the whites. i hope his wish will come to pass and i hope it has all ready. i must close now

so goodby
Annie



FAN 1865

My DEAR Helen.
the BELLS are RINGING
the CANNONS are ROARING
how GOOD how GOOD MAMA AND
i DO not no WHAT the
NEWS iS BUT we HAVE Been
CLAPING OUR HANDS ALL the
MEN ARE GOING UP to the
STORE AND the DOGS FOLLOW
~~the~~ AFTER: the FLAG iS
CRAWLING UP the POLE.
AND the BELL RUNG A
HALF A HOUR. O HELEN iT iS
SO GOOD. BUT it SEEMES
SO SAD that UNCLE ELIAS
AND UNCLE JAMES GAVE
UP their LIFE to there
COUNTRY AND CANNOT BE here

6

Town Boundaries

18th century milestone at 1206 Longmeadow Street.

Changes in Town Lines

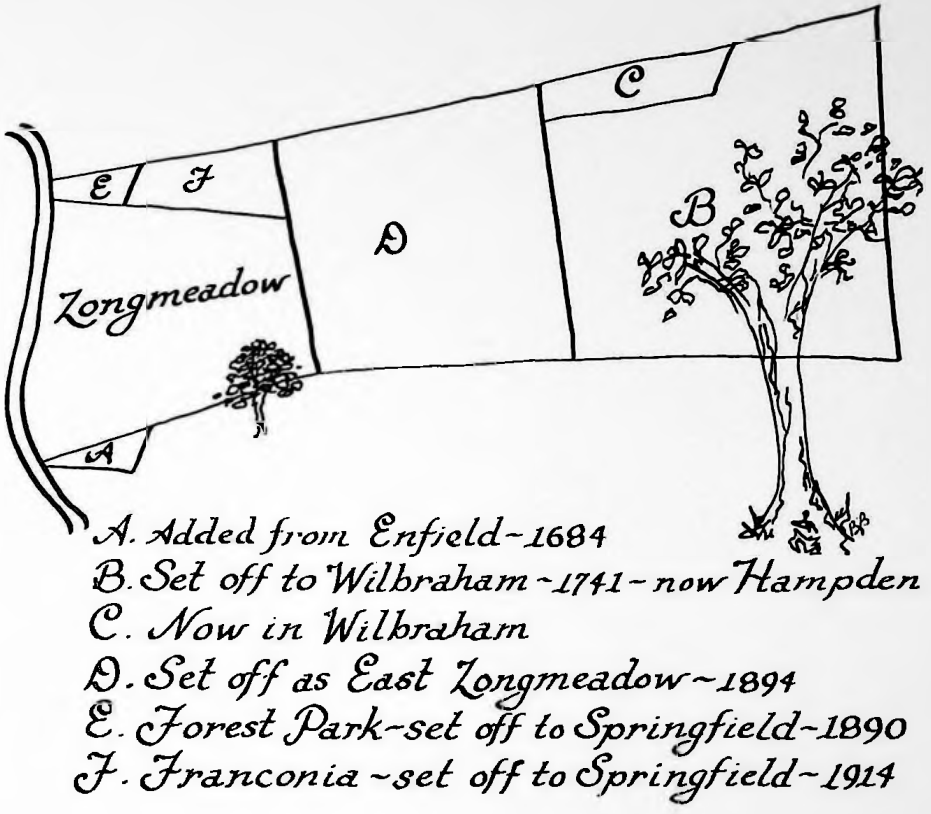
LONGMEADOW became a precinct, the third parish of Springfield, on February 14, 1714, and its initial boundaries were set then. Its southern border was defined by the fluctuating line between it and neighboring Enfield. On the north the boundary line started at the mouth of Pecousic Brook and ran due east roughly parallel with today's Sumner Avenue but about three tenths of a mile below it. This included land that is now part of Forest Park. On the west the border was the Connecticut River, and to the east the new precinct's territory extended to "Province lands," that is, lands that had not yet been designated as belonging to a particular town. This eastern border on today's map would be at the west line of Monson, which was then a part of Brimfield; thus, Longmeadow included an area that was to become first the southern part of Wilbraham and later the town of Hampden. The East Longmeadow area was called the Inward Commons, and the Hampden area was the Outer Commons. These were the lands in which all citizens were free to pasture their stock.

It took a long time, much controversy, and many negotiations to work out the borderline between Connecticut and Massachusetts. Springfield was so far from the Boston area origins of its settlers that at first it was told to report to Hartford as the seat of its colonial government. For three years representatives were sent from Springfield to the General Court in Hartford instead of to Boston.

In 1642 Massachusetts hired two surveyors, Nathaniel Woodward and Solomon Saffrey, to run the Colony line in accordance with its charter three miles south of the Charles River. Woodward and Saffrey located the southernmost point of the Charles in the town of Wrentham and went what they thought was three miles south to fix a starting point approximately at the northeast corner of today's Rhode Island. They designated this point 41 degrees 55 minutes north latitude and ran the Massachusetts border due west.

Fifty years later two Connecticut surveyors began at the same place but identified it correctly as 42 degrees 3 minutes north latitude. Finally, at the turn of the century, a joint Massachusetts-Connecticut committee pointed out that Woodward and Saffrey had fixed their starting point more than seven miles south of the Charles River instead of the three miles designated in the Massachusetts charter. The error put Woodstock, Enfield, Somers, and Suffield in Massachusetts, where they remained for over a century. For part of that time Enfield, Somers, and Suffield were within Springfield bounds.

In 1683 Enfield (called Freshwater Brook) was set off as a separate town from Springfield. Its northern boundary was Longmeadow Brook, which was the southernmost of Longmeadow's four brooks and which was far south of where it is today. Unfortunately, this boundary cut across the property of some residents who considered themselves Longmeadow people; so in 1684 Enfield and Springfield renegotiated the boundary. This time they started it at the Connecticut River forty rods south of Longmeadow Brook and ran it due east for a mile. Then it turned north for forty rods to rejoin the original line. The old straight line had cut across Longmeadow Street on the bend in the hill just before the level stretch north of the present state line.



Town Boundaries

In 1713 the boundary was still a point of contention. Commissioners from Connecticut and Massachusetts ran the whole line again placing it essentially where it is today. The towns south of the border, however, continued to remain politically in Massachusetts, which argued that since they were settled by Massachusetts people they should remain with that Colony. It was not until 1749 that Enfield, Suffield, Somers, and Woodstock, as a result of an appeal to the Crown, became part of Connecticut. Even then, Massachusetts refused to admit that it had lost these towns and kept levying taxes that were not paid and sending the towns notices of fast days and elections. This issue was not entirely dropped until 1826.

Other boundary changes have been simpler. Wilbraham became the fourth precinct of Springfield in 1740, taking the eastern portion of Longmeadow.

Town lines remained unchanged until late in the nineteenth century when the Springfield industrialist Everett Hosmer Barney donated his estate to the city of Springfield as an addition to Forest Park. The land was given on the condition that the portion of the property that was in Longmeadow be annexed to Springfield. The annexation occurred in 1890, and Longmeadow lost its northwest corner: the King Philip's Stockade area and that part of Forest Park which lies south of Pecousic Brook.

The Massachusetts General Court in 1894 passed an act to allow the incorporation of East Longmeadow as a separate town. Just over half of the territory of Longmeadow became the new town of East Longmeadow.

With the twentieth century came extensive real estate development. By 1914 the northeast section of Longmeadow, known as Franconia, was developing as a neighborhood. The area abutted Springfield along the new Forest Park boundary, and it extended to the East Longmeadow line. The southern mile of modern Dickinson Street and all of Springfield's Dwight Road were in Franconia. It was separated from the rest of Longmeadow by undeveloped land. Children in Franconia attended Springfield schools; their tuition was paid by the town of Longmeadow. Voters had to travel through Springfield in order to get to "the village." Longmeadow supported legislation introduced in Boston to annex the property to Springfield. The Springfield City Council was opposed, because the costs of improvements needed in Franconia were greater than the amount of money that could be collected there in taxes. A legislative compromise lifted some of the financial burden and the law passed; Longmeadow lost another 877 acres.

Longmeadow became a precinct in 1714. Fewer than the 40 families generally required for such status had control of a thirty-five-square-mile area. In 1983 the town's 16,000 residents are housed in the westernmost portion of the original Longmeadow, in the approximately 9 square miles within the boundaries that exist today.

East Longmeadow

THE QUESTION of the division of Longmeadow into two parts was brought up as early as 1865 and was considered seriously during the 1880s. Although the East and West villages had had close ties for many years, they were separated geographically by three miles of sand and forest, and became separated socially and commercially, with clearly different interests.

The people of the west side, commonly called The Street, were more affluent than those on the east side. The west side citizens also paid more heavily in bank and corporation taxes.

The East Village was growing more rapidly than the area around Longmeadow Street, however, because of the booming quarry industry in the latter half of the nineteenth century. There was dissatisfaction on both sides as to the valuation for taxation of the stone quarries and the tenement houses which lodged the quarry workers and their families.

Residents of The Street argued that they had only about one third of the schools and one third of the roads to maintain in their part of the community but were paying one half or two thirds of all the taxes. East Village residents acknowledged that some of these conditions did prevail. In fact, they wished to keep the town a single community so that they could derive the benefits of public works

projects at a relatively low outlay on the part of their section of town.

Only a half-dozen individuals of The Street were against the division, but there were about twice that number of nonsecessionists in the East Village, which now had the majority of voters because of its population increase.

Many town meetings were called to determine the taxable valuation of the quarries. One expert would rule that the quarries were overtaxed, and another would argue that they were not taxed highly enough.

At one time during the controversy, The Street offered the East Village a goodly sum of cash and all the town tools in the east section if the East Village would submit amicably to a division of the town. However, this offer was refused by East Village voters.

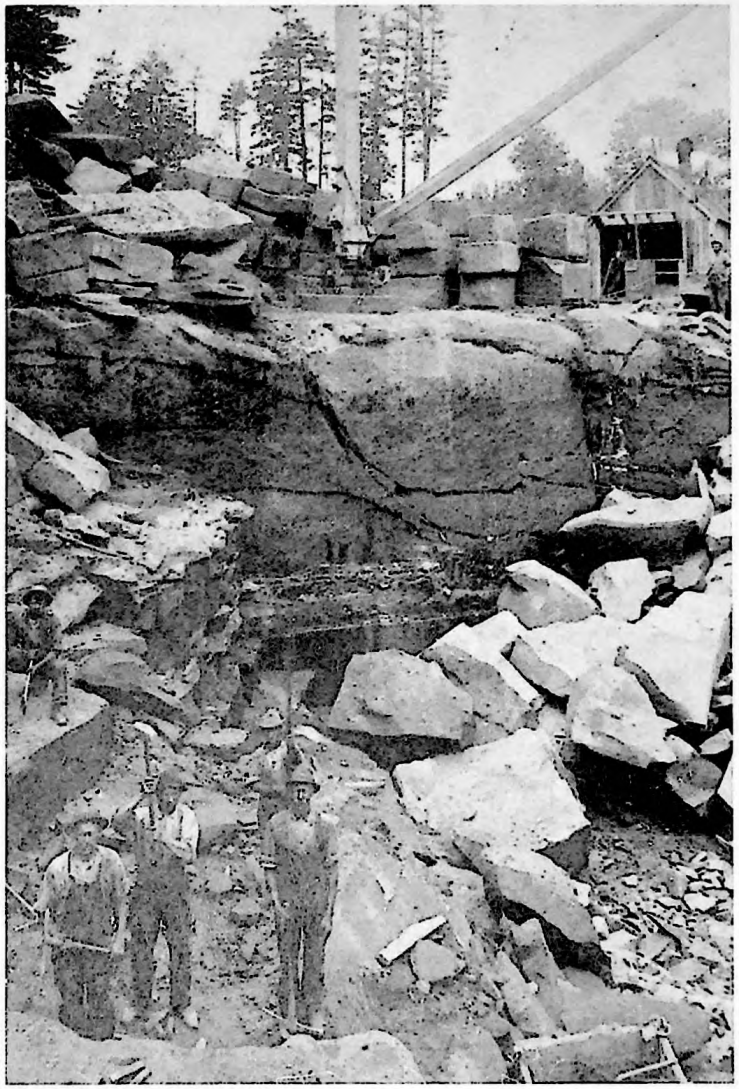
The East Village population had been increasing while the West Village population had been decreasing, as census figures show. In 1875 "East" Longmeadow had 797 inhabitants, and "West" Longmeadow had 670. In 1880 "East" had 854; "West," 551.

As the population of the East Village surpassed that of the West Village, it became common for the elected officials of the town to live in and represent the East. Two selectmen usually represented the East Village; the remaining member, the West Village. East Village voters, greater in number, had their own way at elections and town meetings for many years.

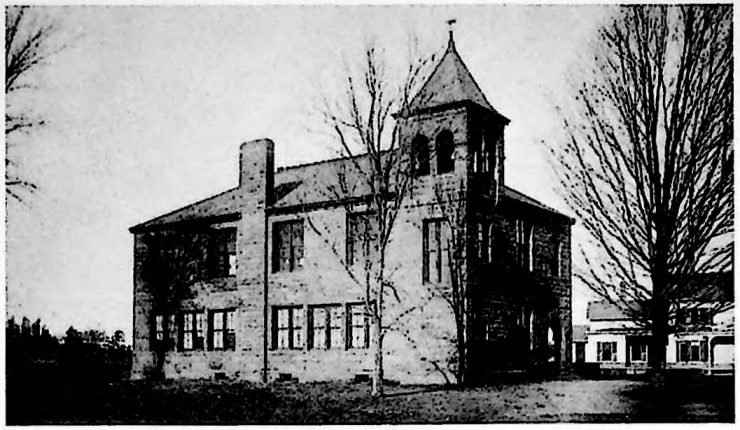
Slowly but surely, during the late 1880s and early 1890s the separation of the two villages became inevitable. The East Village grew larger each year, and the voices of West Village voters grew louder as they continued to shoulder more than half the tax burden.

The East Village required more expenditures and improvements than the West, as the East had many more miles of roads, more inhabitants, more industry and business, and a busy railroad which transported the quarried stone to all parts of the country.

When the West Village asked for a half mile of new road, the East asked for a mile of road. When the West asked for a sidewalk to its railroad station, the East asked for a sidewalk twice the distance. When the town needed a town hall, it was built in the East, constructed of brownstone donated by the Norcross Brothers Company,



At the height of the East Longmeadow quarry business up to seventeen carloads of sandstone were shipped by rail from the town each day.



Centennial photograph of the East Longmeadow Town Hall which served both sections of the town before they were separated.

and first used for the town meeting of 1882. The steel door of the vault is still inscribed "Town of Longmeadow" in today's East Longmeadow town hall.

The annual town meeting in April 1893 was a disaster! It resulted in a petition to the state legislature by the citizens of West Longmeadow to divide itself from East Longmeadow. The detailed transcript of the hearings, which lasted several weeks, relate many small details of the struggle to divide. Reportedly, some town officials were not reelected, and others were not elected if they had been outspoken about the division.

The division finally took place, and East Longmeadow was incorporated under an act signed on May 19, 1894, to take effect on July 1 of that year.

East Longmeadow fared well immediately after the division. A tax rate of $15.25 per 1,000 in 1897 was reduced to $12.75 per 1,000 the following year.

The division of Longmeadow created two very distinct groups: wealthier citizens, professional and businessmen, in the West, most of them living in large homes on Longmeadow Street; and workingmen in the East, living on farms or in small homes, and working in the stone quarries or running small businesses.

The transcript of the division records that in 1894 West Longmeadow had:

A post office	Railroad station
Express office	A public telephone
Two churches	Three schools
Two grocery stores	One blacksmith shop
One grist mill	One knitting mill (in disuse)

One shop for manufacturing spectacles and thimbles

East Longmeadow had:

A post office	Railroad station
Express office	Telegraph office
Five churches	Seven or eight schools
Four grocery stores	Two meat markets
One drug store	Three blacksmith shops
One harness shop	One grist and sawing mill
Two mills for sawing stone	17 quarries, 12 being worked

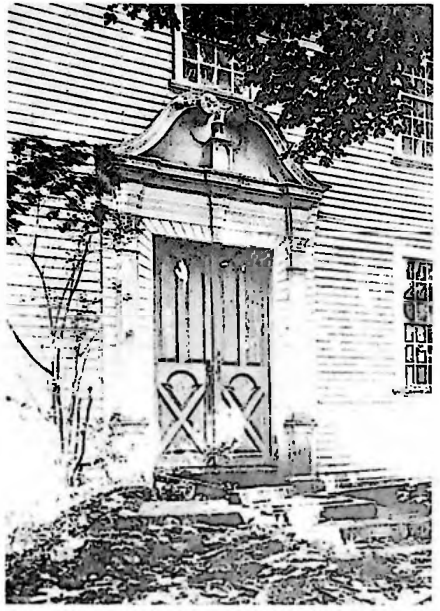
One barber and tailor shop (filled by the same man)

The population of Longmeadow at the time of the division was over 2,200, and the area of the town was about 25 square miles. The creation of the town of East Longmeadow took away 13.4 square miles of territory and approximately 1,600 individuals from the parent community.

On paper it would appear that East Longmeadow got much the better of the bargain at the time of separation, but, the residents of Longmeadow rejoiced in being rid of their satellite village. A certain Mr. Willard of The Street begged the pen which the governor used in signing the enactment of the division, and drove up and down Longmeadow Street waving the pen in triumph! The climax of the celebration was a giant clambake held on the Green on the Fourth of July.

7

Longmeadow Personalities



The much copied original doorway to "Marchant" Colton's home is preserved in the Boston Museum of Fine Arts. The house was dismantled in 1916.

"Marchant" Samuel Colton

"MARCHANT" SAMUEL COLTON has long been a prominent figure in Longmeadow legend. His rise to great wealth, his extravagant house, his shipbuilding, and his Revolutionary War era troubles have been the stuff of local lore from Longmeadow's centennial to its bicentennial.

One persistent story is that Colton began his business as a teenaged orphan with one slave and a few cows. His record books do indicate that he was selling buttons, ribbons, apples, and fabrics while still in his teens. It was not on these trinkets that his fortune was founded, however, but rather on the firm foundation of a substantial inheritance. In 1743 Samuel's father was one of the largest property owners in Longmeadow, according to the tax lists. When he died the next year, he left his son not only a slave and some cattle but also two thirds of his £11,000 estate. By 1750 the twenty-three-year-old Samuel Colton was already the second-wealthiest man in the precinct of Longmeadow. The three richest men on the 1750 tax list were cousins: Simon, Samuel, and John Colton. Samuel's wealth could only have increased when he married Simon's daughter Flavia

in 1759. She died in 1763, and two years later Samuel married John's daughter Lucy.

By the early 1750s "Marchant" Samuel Colton was an active trader selling tools; housewares; imported fabrics; and West Indies goods such as rum, molasses, and sugar. In payment he accepted local produce and lumber and gave credit for labor on his farm. Colton may have been more farmer than merchant in those early years, for the deeds call him "yeoman" or "husbandman" as late as 1754. In 1756 he built a shop at the rear of his splendid new house. He filled the shop with fabrics, spices, hardware, and ceramics from Boston importers. From the late 1750s through the 1760s the deeds refer to him as "shopkeeper." Not until the 1770s was Colton accorded the title of "Merchant" in the deeds (or "Marchant," as the Reverend Stephen Williams wrote it in his diary).

The Longmeadow tax list of 1761 identifies Colton as the richest man in the precinct, with an assessment one-third higher than that of the next wealthiest man. On the list for 1775, Colton remained first among the 109 property owners. By now his assessment had increased to three times that of the second-place individual, constituting almost 10 percent of the precinct's total valuation.

Colton's records confirm the tales of his shipbuilding on the Connecticut River. He launched the brigantine *Friendship* on April 10, 1765, taking advantage of spring's high water. His master shipwright was a Middletown, Connecticut, man with the good nautical name of Waterman Eells. According to tradition, Colton sent *Friendship* on trading voyages to Cuba and England. One trip of 1771 between Bristol, England, and Portsmouth, New Hampshire, is documented, but "Marchant's" books reveal little about the shipping operations. It is apparent that Colton did not personally make such voyages, for his shop ledgers throughout this period continue to display his distinctive scrawl. Stephen Williams's diaries explain one reason that Samuel kept close to home. In 1775 the minister noted visiting Colton, "who is confined to his House & Allmost to his bed by his Gouty disorders. But he is capable of takeing care of his worldly business – trade."

"Marchant" Colton's high standing in the community is demonstrated by his selection to the governing Precinct Committee in 1774. Yet in 1776 his shop was raided twice by his patriotic neighbors, who claimed to be acting against his anti-Revolutionary views and business policies. The raiders carried off most of his rum, molasses, sugar, and salt. According to tradition, Colton never again spoke to his neighbors, but this seems unlikely in light of his reappointment to the Precinct Committee in 1777. Also, his books show that he continued to conduct his business throughout this period. But the wounds of the war were not quickly healed. Legal disputes over the raids continued into the early 1780s, when over 100 of Colton's neighbors petitioned the Massachusetts General Court in support of the raiders. In 1781 an act was passed into law prohibiting Colton from suing to recover his losses.

Perhaps that petition hurt Colton more sharply than the raids themselves. The typical bold handwriting in the business ledgers began to show signs of a marked tremor in 1783. A few months later, in 1784, the merchant died at age fifty-seven. He left behind a sizable estate, but also a forty-two-year-old widow and children aged fifteen, thirteen, eleven, and six.

Johnny Appleseed

JOHN CHAPMAN is described as a strange mixture of plant nurseryman, herb doctor, minor military hero, and religious enthusiast. He appeared along the Ohio River in the early 1800s and became known as Johnny Appleseed because of the earnest manner in which he distributed apple seeds and sprouts. The legend of Johnny Appleseed had been thriving in Ohio for about 100 years before researchers took it seriously enough to investigate his Massachusetts origins. In 1935 Johnny Appleseed's birth as John Chapman was discovered in the church records at Leominster. The Leominster connection was made because the Ohio researchers knew enough to come to Longmeadow, where the second marriage of Johnny's father, Nathaniel Chapman, was recorded with the note that Chapman was "late of Leominster."

There were still apple trees on the Cooley property in Longmeadow in 1921

Nathaniel Chapman's first marriage was to Elizabeth Symonds, and the couple had three children: Elizabeth, born in 1770; John (Johnny Appleseed), born September 26, 1774; and Nathaniel, who was born and died in 1776. The father, Nathaniel, was a minuteman who marched off to aid his countrymen at the battle of Lexington. The mother, Elizabeth Symonds Chapman, died on July 18, 1776. Her children, six-year-old Elizabeth and two-year-old John, were probably taken in by her family, the Symondses of Leominster.

Nathaniel Chapman continued to fight in the Revolutionary War and wound up with the militia in Springfield, Massachusetts. On July 24, 1780, he married Lucy Cooley of Longmeadow. They lived in Longmeadow during the years 1780 to 1803 and had ten children before moving to Ohio. It is assumed by most biographers of Johnny Appleseed that Nathaniel brought Johnny from Leominster to Longmeadow. He would have been almost six years old at the time of Nathaniel's second marriage.

There has never been any documentary proof that Johnny Appleseed lived in Longmeadow; he was not born here; and he neither married nor died here. There was a belief among Ohio farmers that he came from somewhere near Springfield, Massachusetts. He appeared to have been a reasonably well educated man; along with his remarkable skills in surviving as a woodsman, he had a propensity for reading. It is entirely reasonable to assume that his education and even his love for apple trees came from Longmeadow. During the 1780s Longmeadow was still a place of apple orchards and cider mills.

Some stories have said that it was Johnny's stepmother who caused him to leave his father's home. It seems likely that it was not Lucy Cooley Chapman's attitude but economic pressure that pushed him out of the nest early. Nathaniel Chapman had a hard time supporting his family, and the crowding of half brothers and half sisters in a cramped home might have caused an independent person like Johnny to leave early.

One aspect of Johnny Appleseed that probably did not come from Longmeadow was his preaching of the religion of Emanuel Swedenborg. He always carried his New Testament with him and often had Swedenborgian publications that he distributed where he could. His religion led him to dressing in old clothes and going barefoot even in bad weather, for he believed that the more he deprived himself in this life, the less he would suffer in the next.

When Johnny died in 1847 at the age of seventy-two, he was famous throughout the Ohio Valley. In his decided individualism he had defied religious and social customs. The apple trees he planted strengthened the Ohio economy. The legend he left behind is claimed by the people of Leominster, Massachusetts; the people of Pennsylvania, Ohio, and Indiana; and even by people of Longmeadow, Massachusetts.

Eleazer Williams

IN JANUARY 1800 a young boy came to Longmeadow, twelve to fifteen years of age, about whom nearly a dozen books and hundreds of magazine and newspaper articles have been written. Eleazer Williams was brought by his father Thomas Williams and was accompanied by his brother John. The two boys stayed with Deacon Nathaniel Ely, Jr., in the big brick house still at the corner of Longmeadow Street and Ely Road.

Eleazer Williams in 1852, from a painting by Chevalier Fagnani.

As mentioned before almost 100 years earlier Stephen Williams, who was to become Longmeadow's first minister, and his sister Eunice were captured by Indians in the Deerfield massacre. Eunice was never redeemed; instead, she chose to live with the Indians in Canada and to marry an Indian chief. She had a daughter Mary, who married an English surgeon named Ezekiel Williams. Mary and Ezekiel had a son Thomas, who married a full-blooded Indian and had eleven children. It was this Thomas Williams who brought two boys to Longmeadow to be educated here.

An eyewitness account describes the arrival of the two Indian boys in their Longmeadow classroom. Unused to restraint, they would suddenly jump up and cry "Umph!" or some other gutteral exclamation. They had little tolerance for confinement and would take to their heels unexpectedly. Their early attempts to enunciate the letters of the English alphabet greatly amused their classmates. The schoolmaster was patient with them, and eventually they became more disciplined and attentive.

The two boys were very different in appearance and manners. John had marked Indian characteristics; Eleazer had brown hair, hazel eyes, and features resembling those of Europeans. John preferred outdoor activities; Eleazer was good at his studies and learned Greek and Latin as well as English. John's birth and the births of ten other children of Thomas and his Indian wife were recorded in the Roman Catholic church records in Caughnawaga, Quebec. No record of Eleazer's birth has ever been found.

Many people believe that this boy who came to live with Deacon Ely was *not* the son of Thomas Williams and his Indian wife but was the lost dauphin, the son of Louis XVI of France and his queen, Marie Antoinette, both of whom were guillotined during the French Revolution. The dauphin was born in 1785 and was taken from his mother and imprisoned in 1793. History records that the dauphin died of abuse and neglect on June 8, 1795, but he is known also as "the lost dauphin" because of the many stories that he was not dead. More than 100 men claimed to be the dauphin, and Eleazer is one of the few whose claims were taken seriously.

In 1841 the Prince de Joinville, son of Louis Philippe, came to America and made inquiries regarding a person named Eleazer Williams, who was said to be living among the Indians. This led to his going, for no other known reason, to Green Bay, Wisconsin, where Eleazer was living. Eleazer's journals tell of interviews with the prince, in which he was told that he was the son of Louis XVI and was urged as Louis XVII to sign a solemn abdication of the crown to Louis Philippe. In return he would be given a princely estate, and royal property belonging to him would be restored. To protect the rights of his heirs, Eleazer refused.

In 1848 Eleazer received a letter from New Orleans telling of an aged Frenchman who, shortly before his death, declared that he had taken part in bringing to America the dauphin, who had become a missionary to the Indians, and was then known as Eleazer Williams. Eleazer had kept quiet about the visit from the Prince de Joinville, but he now consulted by letter with Rev. Joshua Leavitt, who was then editor of the *Daily Chronotype* of Boston. Thus, the debate over Eleazer's birth reached the journalists of the day.

Among the asserted evidences of the identity of Eleazer with the dauphin were his Bourbon-like features and several scars, such as were said to have been on the dauphin's body. Someone took the trouble to get an affidavit written in English and signed by Thomas Williams' wife asserting that she had given birth to Eleazer; but a second affidavit written at her dictation in the Indian language said that Eleazer was her adopted son. The Prince de Joinville declared that he had not made the alleged statements to Eleazer and had met him only by chance.

The boy Eleazer Williams definitely received a Longmeadow education while staying for some years with the Ely family. His subsequent missionary activities are well documented. Only his birth remains a mystery—it would be difficult for anyone to prove the circumstances of his own birth in the absence of any written record and without certain knowledge of the lives of his parents and grandparents.

Mary Ann Booth in her new electric car in 1900.

Mary Ann Booth

MARY ANN ALLARD BOOTH was an independent woman of Longmeadow who achieved success as a scientist in an era when women were not expected to have careers. She is known today as a nineteenth-century microscopist, even though her most lasting claim to local fame is that she was the second person and the first woman in Springfield to own an automobile.

Born in 1843 to Samuel and Rhoda Colton Booth, Mary Ann began her formal education in the Longmeadow public schools and Wilbraham Academy. She then suffered an illness, probably infantile paralysis, which left her an invalid. Her father, a noted mineralogist, encouraged Mary Ann to develop her interest in science. A succession of private tutors then came to her home until she was well enough to travel to England, where she completed her studies. Although she continued to walk with crutches, a self-planned program of physical therapy eventually freed her from invalidism.

Mary Ann returned to her home in Longmeadow where she pursued a career in research science. Her workroom was a boxlike addition to the Booth mansion, the painted brick house that still stands at the corner of Greenacre and Longmeadow streets. Melissa Caro, her companion, told of one project that was carried out in that laboratory. Mary Ann bred carpet beetles in pieces of carpeting. She assigned to her companion the daily task of counting the beetles so that the scientist could record their number and patterns of procreation.

In 1877, when she was thirty-four years old, Mary Ann obtained her first microscope, and her scientific specialty quickly developed. Perhaps because her long years of invalidism had been so confining and because her powers of observation had grown so acute, she became interested in one of the smallest forms of life – microscopic parasites. In addition to collecting and studying parasites, she began to photograph them. Gaslight was the artificial lighting of the time, and gaslight illuminated her work. In 1882 she became a member of the American Microscopic Society; in 1885, of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, to which she was elected a fellow in 1894.

In Longmeadow, Mary Ann was considered to be a bit eccentric. She rode a bicycle when other women did not. One time an armed and irate Everett Hosmer Barney chased her out of his pond in what is now Forest Park. She was wading, skirts tucked up, looking for specimens. After a long negotiation, Everett Barney gave her permission to gather whenever she wished.

Mary Ann established such skill and reputation as a lecturer that she was in particular demand with scientific societies. She took her stereopticon and her photomicrographs and traveled extensively across the continent, throughout Alaska and Canada. She frequently crossed the ocean to Europe to travel and share her material with other scientists.

Mary Ann lived her last years in Springfield. When health problems caught up with her and she was once again mostly bedridden, she edited *Practical Microscopy* on a board held in front of her as a copy desk. She was a contributor to many textbooks and journals of her day. At 5:30 P.M. on September 19, 1922, Mary Ann Allard Booth died while walking in her garden. She was seventy-nine years old. She is buried in the family plot in Longmeadow Cemetery.

Reminiscence of a Longmeadow Boyhood

"IT WAS A KIND of Huck Finn life back then," says a man who savored growing up in Longmeadow in the 1920s and 1930s. He never left Longmeadow – from baptism by Rev. Randolph Merrill to retirement in the house where his own family grew up, not far from the Green and the other scenes of his youth.

Remembering when Laurel Street and the roads to East Longmeadow were dirt roads, and when the ridge behind today's high school ball fields was an overgrown area abounding with blueberries, he says, "I used to go picking there with my father when I was four years old – and many times he'd lose his full pail looking for me and my empty one!"

Center School, a wooden two-story structure with outside fire escapes, and Miss Florence Hicks in charge, claimed his earliest school days; the adjacent junior high was school for his seventh-, eighth-, and ninth-grade years.

Winters were wonderful. There was good family sliding down Depot [now Emerson] Road, with some days as many as 300 adults and kids up on that hill. With not many autos, and no town yards or

Far left: Noble's Pond, one of Longmeadow's swimming holes near today's Greenacre Avenue, disappeared with the paving of Longmeadow Street.

Left: Before Bliss Pool was built, the town beach was at "The Pump," at the old water tower behind St. Andrew's Church.

trucks then, town officials would open up the hydrant to ice the road, and the rippers would fly down the long hill with as many as ten or twelve riders on each — right over the railroad tracks if the flashing red signal wasn't on! And when those meadow ponds and wetlands were solid, we could skate from the foot of Emerson Road almost to the Connecticut line, especially if you opened your jacket to catch the wind.

Summers the boy and his pals swam at "the pump," the pond in the shadow of the 100-foot metal water tower near the present St. Andrew's Church. The boys also sneaked swims in the outdoor pool on the Wallace estate, now Bay Path Junior College. Yet the coolest spot around on a humid day was the four-story icehouse on the edge of Country Club Pond, where winter ice was stored, packed in sawdust, and where only the most adventuresome kids dared to slip in for brief, forbidden refreshment.

Year-round the trolleys rattled past a variety of recreations on the Green. They transported Longmeadow's high school youngsters to and from Springfield schools for less than ten cents a ride, though the boys hitchhiked or pooled car rides and saved the town's monthly travel reimbursement for pocket money. The trolleys also provoked some boyhood pranks. When the cars slowed down for switching the boys would pull down the trolley pole power arm, disengaging the power, and then "run like the devil" when the motorman got out to reconnect it.

"We made our own entertainment, even at town-offered Saturday afternoon nickel movies at the Community House." The boys sat in the balconies, running around up and down those uncarpeted stairs "to raise the dead" until the patience of the supervisor, Mrs. Tracy Brand, was sorely tried.

As teenagers the group found entertainment in the meadows, fishing the streams and hunting rabbit, squirrel, and pheasant. The boys added a roof to an old hut, making it their headquarters, and used an oil drum stove to cook the potatoes and corn that "just happened to by lying around nearby farm fields."

"We had more freedom then," says the man of his Longmeadow childhood. "Those were some times. Kids today can't repeat them."

Reminiscence of a Longmeadow Girlhood

AN EVENING of recollections by a Longmeadow native, mother of two and now a grandmother, provided these memories of happy days from 1919 to high school age.

There was no public kindergarten for our Longmeadow girl, but as many as six children at a time attended Miss Twitchell's primary school conducted in a small house on Warren Terrace. School began in earnest in grade 1. As a resident of the north end she went to Converse Street School for the first six grades and became acquainted with Mrs. Greenwood as teacher and principal.

Membership in the youth choir for girls was a part of belonging to the First Congregational Church where the choir sat in the balcony at the rear of the sanctuary. Sunday school was a combined duty and pleasure for the young girl of the 1920s. Classes met in the nearby Center School, and a teacher of special memory was Miss Annie Emerson.

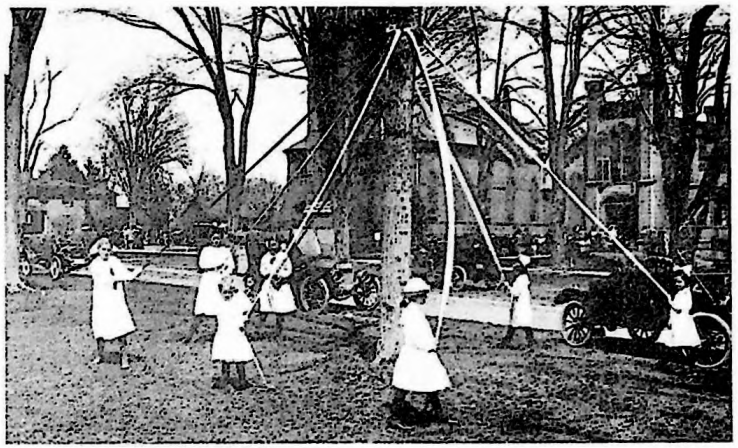
After sixth grade all students went to Longmeadow Junior High, headed by Mr. Ballard Remy, who was both principal and superintendent of schools. Girls were introduced to home economics by Miss Howlett; boys struggled with manual training under the instruction of Mr. Hovey. Outdoor physical education meant a trip to a recreation area behind Storrs Library, now Strople Memorial Ball Field.

A highlight of church and community life was the May Breakfast, which had moved from the chapel into the Community House. For the youthful girl workers May Breakfast meant an early morning arrival for preparation, service as aides at noon, walking home for an afternoon respite, and returning for evening dinner duties.

A springtime memory was the delight of playing marbles and the excitement of a townwide tournament. Saturday memories include the afternoon movies in the Community House. Manager and disciplinarian of the movie days was Mrs. Brand, and the admission was five cents. In September all schools were closed on Eastern States Exposition Day; pupils had free admission to the Exposition but were charged five cents for a hamburg sandwich. Myron Ryder's elite dancing class was on the social calendar, with participants adhering strictly to Ryder white glove protocol.

Other memories include the tasty baked goods from Mrs. Storer's bakery, now the site of a real estate office. Another recollection concerns the time when Mr. Willard's house was jacked up and moved north to 316 Longmeadow Street, making way for the farmland behind the house to become home lots on the new Meadowbrook Road.

The surest sign of growing up was the prospect of tenth grade at Central, Commerce, or Technical high school in Springfield. Having made the big choice of which school to attend, students boarded the trolley for its winding trip to Springfield, leaving Longmeadow memories behind for the adventures of going away from home.



Maypole dance at a May Breakfast of an earlier day.

8

Longmeadow Becomes a Suburb

The Reservoir until 1922, now Laurel Pond

The Water System

THE GROWTH OF LONGMEADOW at the turn of the century happened to coincide with an increase in knowledge of waterborne diseases. The state board of health, a pioneer in water purification studies, had been furnishing information and advice to Massachusetts towns throughout the last quarter of the nineteenth century. As early as 1883, the Longmeadow school committee had expressed concern that the outhouses at two of its schools were located only a few feet from the wells. It is not surprising, then, that one of the first acts of the town following the separation of East Longmeadow in 1894 was to vote a $30,000 bond issue to establish a public water supply, followed three years later by an appropriation to construct a sanitary sewer system.

The compact layout of the town made the construction of public water supply and sewage systems practicable: main lines could be laid out along Longmeadow Street, with lateral lines extending to the side streets. The springs that fed Cooley Brook would provide the town with water. About nine acres of land along the brook east

The landmark water tower, demolished in 1936.

of Longmeadow Street were purchased for the water plant and watershed. (The protected watershed was later enlarged to encompass eighty acres.) The waterworks included a covered basin to settle out sand and a roofed storage reservoir with a capacity of some 65,000 gallons, "kept constantly full of pure, live, running water" – both built west of what is now Laurel Pond – and a 105-foot standpipe, or water tower. Water was pumped from the reservoir into the tower; it could also be pumped directly into the street mains for fighting fires. The tower itself, consisting of an 88,000-gallon steel tank set atop a 70-foot steel trestle, was a highly visible landmark that stood for forty-two years off Longmeadow Street near the present St. Andrew's Episcopal Church. From the tower, water flowed under pressure in mains throughout the town, providing a sufficient supply of clean water certified by the state board of health for residential use and also for the first time supplying enough water for fire protection, street sprinkling, and the flushing of the new sanitary sewers.

In 1898, just four years after the division of the town, the selectmen proudly issued a formal invitation to the public to inspect the new water plant, sewers, and sewage filter beds. "Knowing that a large majority of our citizens are not informed in regard to the working and construction of the water and sewer system," the invitation card read, "we earnestly hope you will be present ... Ladies are invited."

This modern piped-water system was not, however, the first for Longmeadow. A much earlier one was described in 1910 by Mrs. George E. Brewer in a document now in the collection of the Longmeadow Historical Society. In the middle of the nineteen century, she wrote, a private company created a public water supply from Cooley Brook. According to Mrs. Brewer, a large waterwheel was connected to a pump that brought water from the brook just west of Longmeadow Street. Water was conveyed by gravity through hollowed-out pine logs buried four feet underground to a set of two public water tubs, each about twenty feet in diameter and eight to ten feet high; one tub was set at Bliss Road and Longmeadow Street and one on the Green. Additional pipes carried water to houses and barns. Unfortunately, the logs leaked so much that the system was

abandoned after several years. A waterworks was later built in the east part of town (East Longmeadow), and up to three public water tubs were maintained in the west part of town for many years, even after the modern piped-water distribution system was installed in 1895.

As Longmeadow's population expanded, additional watershed lands were purchased along Cooley Brook; the reservoir was enlarged and a new concrete reservoir was built; a second pump was installed; a plumbing inspector was appointed; and a main was extended to the Connecticut line so that water from Thompsonville could be used in emergencies. These steps were taken so that the water supply could grow along with the town.

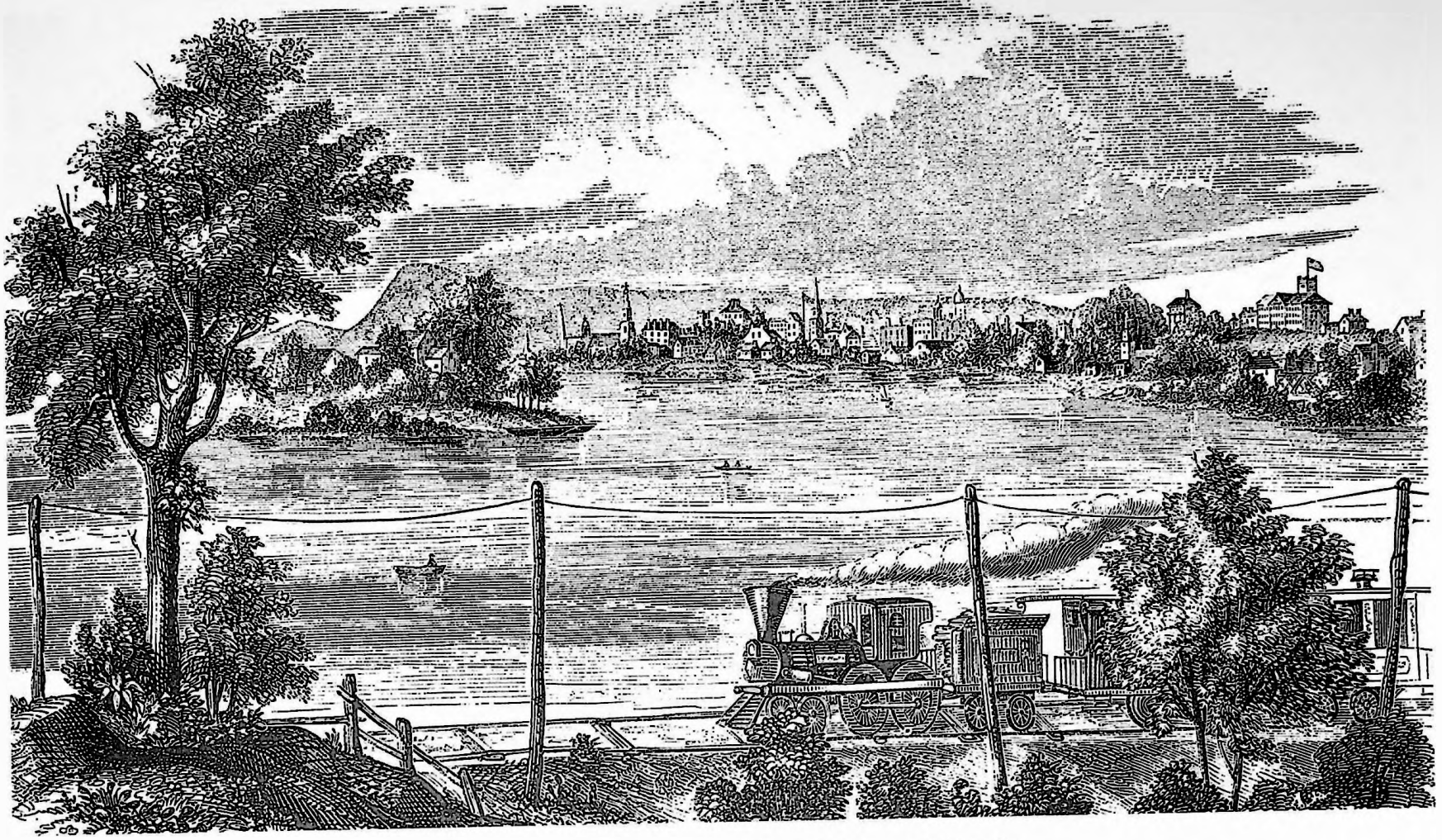
In 1912 the town took two important votes to insure its future supplies—first, the installation of meters to encourage water conservation; second, an emergency connection with the city of Springfield. It took awhile for the citizens to adapt to the new meters, but in 1914 the water commissioners reported that water usage, by virtue of the meters, had been considerably reduced. In 1922 the emergency connection with Springfield was opened permanently. Longmeadow abandoned its waterworks and became fully dependent on Springfield for its water supply.

At the turn of the century the sprinkler watered down the dusty gravel roads several times a day. The public water tub is behind the wagon.

The landmark water tower stood fourteen more years, until in 1936 it was demolished with great difficulty. Ten days of pulling and hauling—with free advice from Longmeadow's corps of sidewalk superintendents—failed to budge the structure. Finally, the steel legs were cut with an acetylene torch, and temporary supporting timbers were set afire. The tower crashed to the ground, leaving only a flock of homeless pigeons in the air. The old watershed lands, developed for recreation by Emergency Relief Administration workers, became Laurel Park and Bliss Park.

Despite further engineering improvements in the distribution system, water pressure failed to keep up with the accelerated building of homes in the postwar period, especially in the newer southeast part of town. The prolonged drought of the 1960s, together with uncertainty about Springfield's reliability as a supplier, set the town thinking again about its future water supply. Two solutions were chosen: the building of a million-gallon water tower off Frank Smith Road in 1965, which would provide pressure during peak usage, and in 1971 the drilling of two wells on Bark Haul Road and off Pondside Road in the meadows. These wells, each of which could produce 1 million gallons of potable water daily, would provide the town's primary water supply. This supply was to be supplemented by water from Springfield during the summer months.

Although the groundwater taken from these wells was regularly tested and found to be safe, many residents objected to its occasional brown color. After only ten years of use, it was determined that the wells had a limited life span. They were closed, and the town—now equipped with a second Springfield connection and a new pumping station on Forest Glen Road to increase pressure for peak summer use—once again relied wholly upon the city of Springfield for its public water supply.



Woodcut published in "Gleasons Pictorial Drawing-Room Companion" shows a train on the Longmeadow tracks in the early 1850s with Springfield in the background

Transportation

LONGMEADOW HAS been easily accessible to travelers since early times. The Connecticut River brought travelers from afar, and Longmeadow Street was a good road for stagecoaches and horseback riders coming from Springfield or Hartford. The arrival of the railroad in the nineteenth century made it easier for townspeople to come and go, but it was the trolleys and automobiles which proved major factors in the growth of the town.

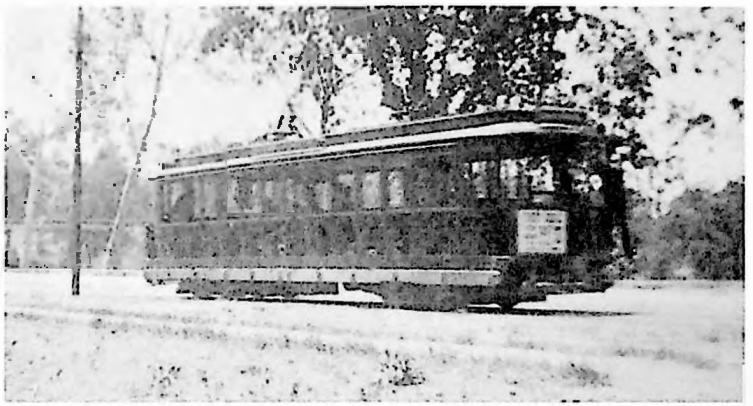
Train service in Longmeadow began in 1844. Tracks were laid along the flat meadowland near the river, and the first Longmeadow station was built in 1845, giving its name to Depot Road. The station was two stories high. The first floor was used for passengers, baggage, and freight; the second provided living quarters for the station agent and his family. In 1884 the Longmeadow line built a larger second station next to the original station, which was sold, moved, and converted to a house in 1890 (it is no longer standing).

The history of Longmeadow's railroads includes the branch of the Hartford and New Haven Railroad that connected the East Village with Springfield. Opened in 1875, the railroad daily carried carloads of quarried sandstone to building sites around the nation. The depot was closed in 1944 but still stands near the center of East Longmeadow.

Trains did a thriving business in Longmeadow for many years. The station was known as one of the busiest on the line to New York. Passengers could arrange to be driven to and from the station by a depot worker. Businessmen commuted to work by train, and the depot served as a convenient place to exchange greetings and gossip. By the beginning of this century, however, commuting by train had diminished because of competition from the newer trolleys. Townspeople lamented the last scheduled stop in 1908. The depot was closed, and packages destined for Longmeadow went to Springfield. A train would stop to pick up passengers only if it was flagged down. The depot no longer guards the train tracks but stands nearby in the public works yard, where it was moved by the town in 1929. The Amtrak passenger trains that travel daily along the meadow tracks and past the train depot are the only trains that pass through Longmeadow today.

The trolley tracks entered Longmeadow in 1896, when the Springfield Street Railway built an electric railway line through Longmeadow to the Connecticut State line. Townspeople soon accepted the trolley as an easy and inexpensive means of traveling to and from Springfield, a convenience which was responsible for transforming Longmeadow from a small village into a suburban community. The Enfield and Longmeadow Street Railway opened a route south from the state line to Thompsonville in that same year, 1896. A transfer station known as the State Line House connected the two lines. Several years later a new connection between Hartford and Springfield was completed, enabling people to travel by trolley between those two cities.

The State Line House was a Longmeadow landmark. John J. Sharkey, manager for the Street Railway, lived in the house and also operated its restaurant. One of Sharkey's famous hot dogs was reason enough for many trips to the end of the line. A traveler could ride on the same trolley car from Longmeadow through Springfield to Chicopee for only five cents.



In the summer all the trolleys were open with side curtains that could be pulled down if it rained.

Right: The State Line Station at the south end of Longmeadow was also known as "Sharkeys" because it was run by John J. Sharkey, shown here.

Far right: The Hurricane of 1938 uprooted giant elms on the Green and brought down the trolley wires on Longmeadow Street.

The busy trolleys ran on a single track; the lines were kept open during winter snowstorms by double-truck, four-motor wing plows that shuttled back and forth the length of the tracks. Several turnouts allowed cars to pass, but one failure in the system caused a disastrous collision in 1905. Two trolleys, each traveling at about twenty miles an hour, collided just south of the Green. A motorman was killed, and many passengers were injured. First aid was administered to the injured in nearby Longmeadow homes. Another tragedy occurred in 1927 when a trolley collided with an automobile, killing four persons and injuring four others.

Soon after the first accident a second set of tracks was laid through most of Longmeadow. Throughout the summer of 1907 construction crews worked to fill ravines at Wheelmeadow and Longmeadow brooks and to lessen the grade of Longmeadow Street and the tracks. These "arches" channeled the flow of water under a roadway built up with tons of sand. Temporary tracks were laid to transport the sand from the unoccupied acreage to the east. Heavy rains today sometimes cause the washout of the arches, as the land tends to return to its natural contour.

With no high school in Longmeadow, students rode the trolley to school in Springfield; shoppers and businessmen used the same transportation to the city. The large fifteen-bench open cars which operated in the summer invited sightseeing and trolley socials. The Longmeadow Historical Society organized a trolley party one summer, traveling over the lines of four interconnecting street railways to arrive in Deerfield.

While daily transportation was provided by trolleys and cars, an exotic form of transportation excited Longmeadow for a short time in the 1920s. When the city of Springfield sought a municipal airport, Dunn Field in Longmeadow filled that need. A 200-acre tract of land in the meadows was purchased and leased to Capt. Harry Hermann, chief pilot, for two years at a dollar a year. Flying operations for business or pleasure trips started in June 1927. An air pageant was held on Labor Day weekend that year, and a large number of commercial planes and two army planes drew crowds of people to the festivities. A severe flood of the Connecticut River that autumn inundated the airfield, and as stated by a local wit, "Dunn Field was done."

By the 1920s automobiles were taking passengers from the trolleys. Floods in 1927 and 1936 had caused problems for the trolley lines, and then the famous hurricane of 1938 hit Longmeadow. The high winds destroyed many of the giant elms along Longmeadow Street, leaving a permanent mark on the town. When the trees fell, they

took trolley wires with them, and buses started taking over the task of providing public transit. Trolley service was restored after a survey of the town indicated a desire for such service, but not for long. The transit company decided to end all trolley service, and on the night of May 11, 1940, the trolley made its last run to the state line and back. Some cars were saved to run in other cities around the country. The town removed the tracks to salvage the steel for the nation's war effort.

Buses provided excellent service to and from the city, "running often, quick and bumpy with no noise to mark their coming." Bus travel diminished in the 1950s and 1960s with the continued growth of automobile travel. As usage dropped, service also declined. The regional Pioneer Valley Transit Authority (PVTA) was organized in 1974 by several communities to subsidize and restore public transit. Travelers can now board buses at Dickinson Street or Dwight Road as well as along the old trolley route on Longmeadow Street.

For many years various private companies offered taxi service in Longmeadow. In 1974 a minibus began to operate for handicapped residents and those over sixty years of age. For a nominal charge the minibus provides portal-to-portal service on weekdays for errands, medical appointments, and so forth. The service is contracted through the PVTA and is underwritten by the town, state, and federal governments.

As recently as 1894 Longmeadow's highways were few. Longmeadow Street, called in various sections North Main, Center Street, and Green Street or South Main, ran from north to south, and Williams Street ran east from the center of town. An interstate highway now passes through the town near the railroad tracks on the meadow, but there is no exit in Longmeadow. A network of streets within the town feeds into three main roads going north to Springfield, two to East Longmeadow, and three south to Connecticut. Construction of new thoroughfares has caused much discussion at town meetings over the years. As main roads have been paved, the surrounding acreage has been developed for housing. Town roads have kept pace with today's travel needs, and they take the drivers of Longmeadow's cars to their destinations with little congestion. The inclusion of sidewalks next to most of the streets of the town aids pedestrian and bicycle traffic.

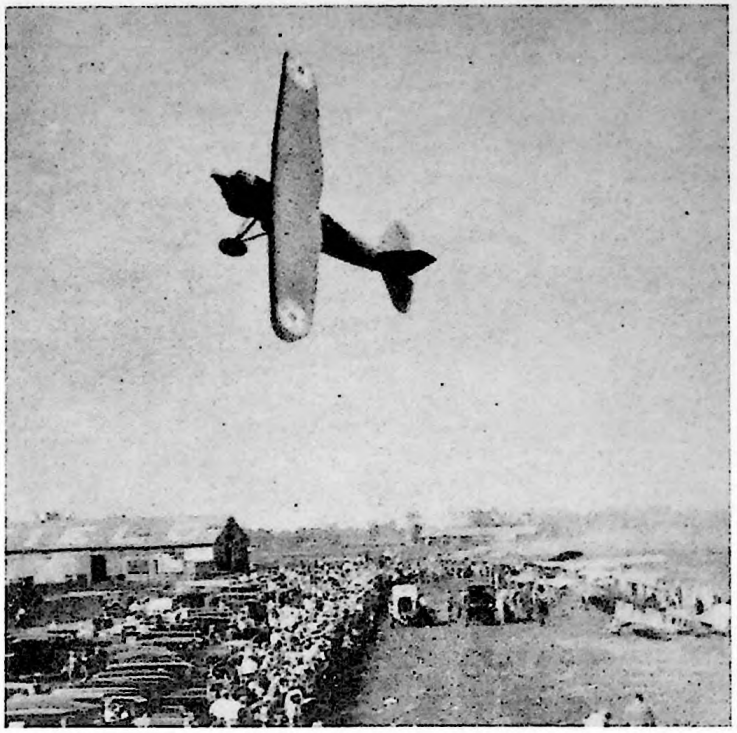
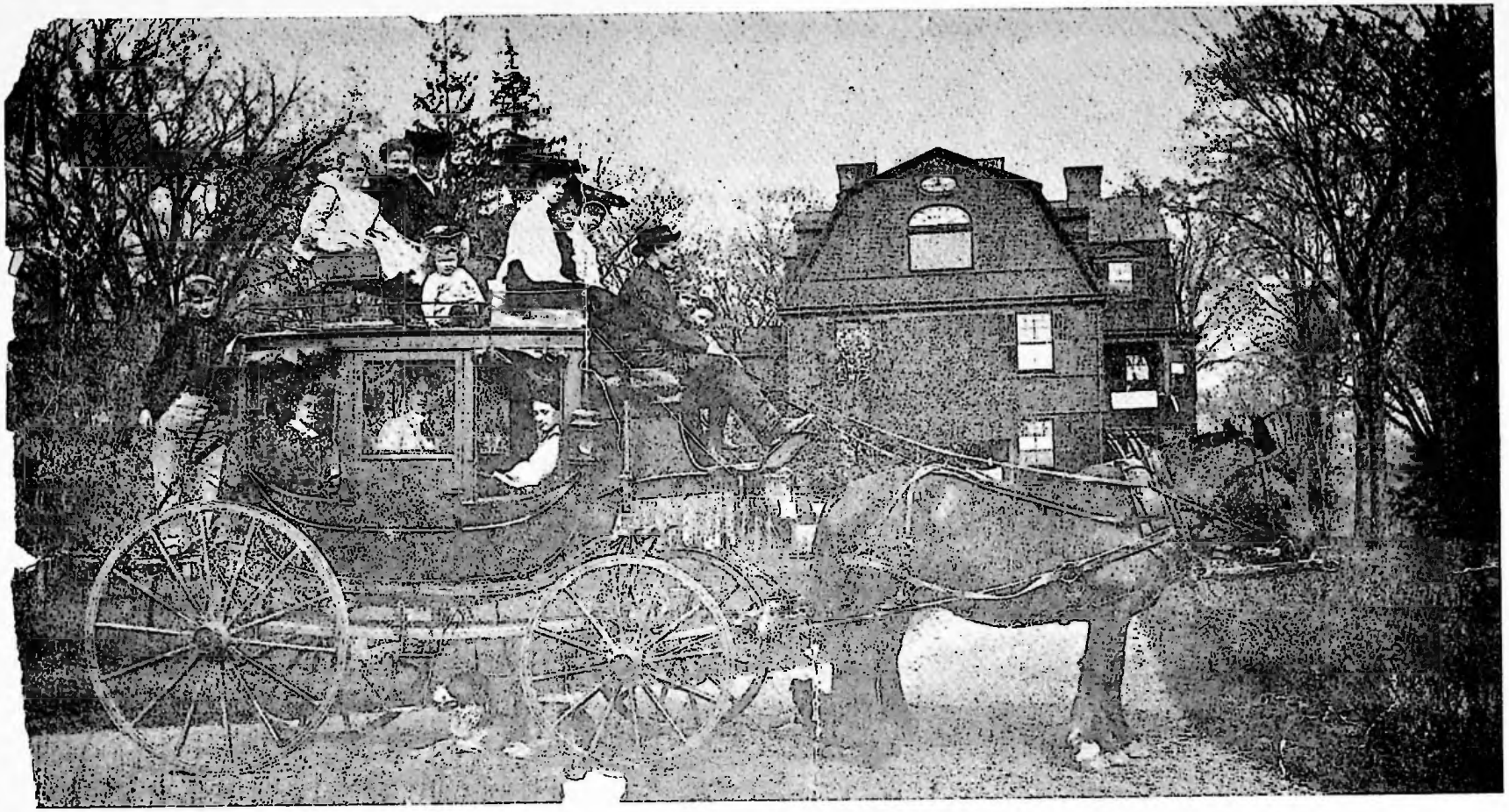
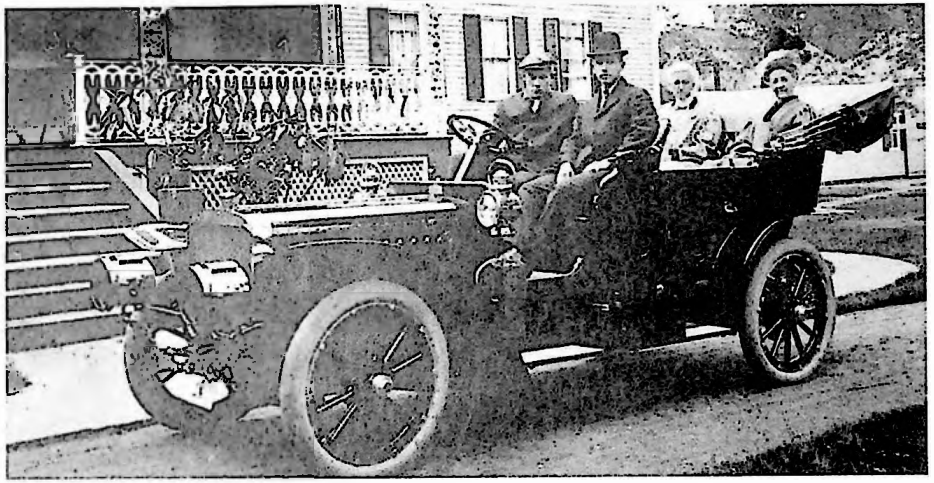


Photo from the rotogravure section of the Springfield "Republican" shows crowd at the Labor Day Air Pageant at Dunn Field in 1927.

Longmeadow has seen the horse, the train, and the trolley come and go; only the bus and the automobile remain. Although the town enjoyed the novelty of an airfield for a time, now only noisy helicopters and an occasional balloon enliven our days. The most startling form of transportation was seen years ago when the May Breakfast committee invited guests to come by an unusual mode of transportation. The Reverend Henry Lincoln Bailey arrived pushing his wife in a wheelbarrow.



. . .nostalgic, romantic and elegant.



Longmeadow Becomes a Suburb

Real estate developer Theodore Leete surveys progress at the site at South Park Terrace in 1897.

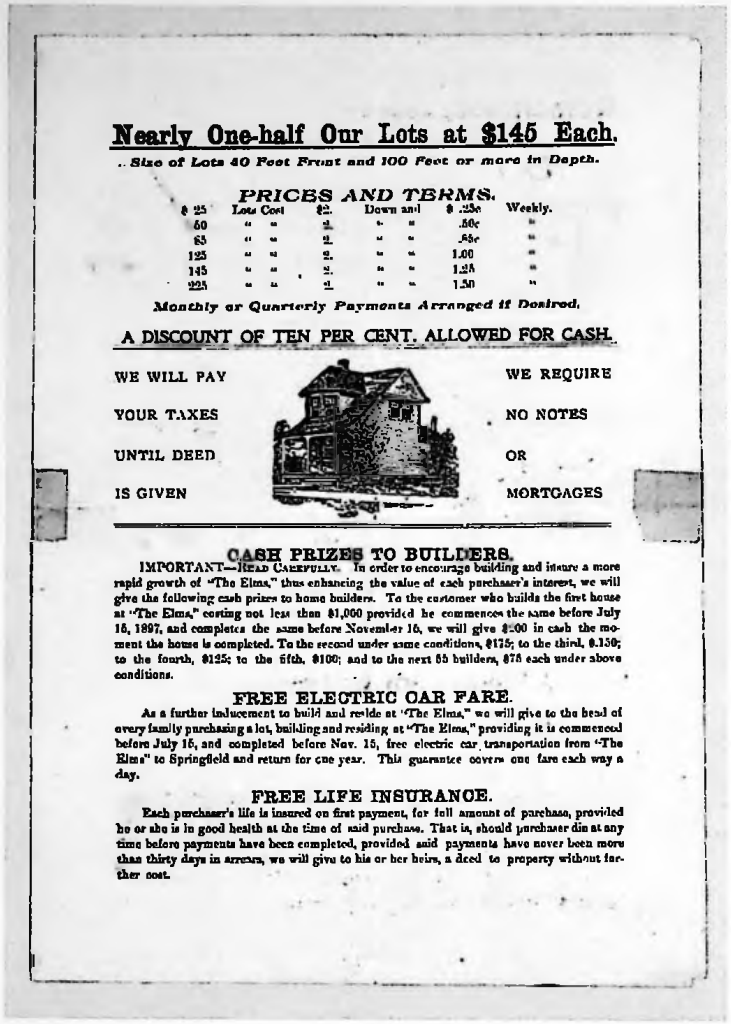
Real Estate Development

IN 1900 Longmeadow had just 194 dwellings, but the blossoming of the town as a residential suburb had already begun. A forty-five acre estate in the northern part of town had been purchased in 1898 by the South Park Terrace Company, and it quickly became a development known as South Park Estates. The 184 building lots were priced from $350 to $1,000, and the area was advertised as an elegant and gracious place for family living. At that time there were only three houses on Laurel Street, which ended at Converse. The Bliss Road area was beginning to be populated, but it was accessible only from Longmeadow Street.

The Dover Road area began to develop in the 1920s, and in the Maple Road area a farm was turned into building lots to become the 15 homes of Greenwood Manor. Colony Hills and Glen Arden were the eastern edge of the community when the parklike residential areas were laid out in 1927. Landscaping was done by the Olmsted Brothers organization, founded by Frederick Law Olmsted, the developer of Central Park in New York City.

In 1929, after years of heated debate on the town meeting floor, Laurel Street was extended south of Converse Street to Bliss Road. Clifton W. Kibbe donated land to the town for the road. He had been building west of the new road, and with the road in place he could make plans for development of Ellington and Farmington roads and their side streets. Forest Acres was the name Kibbe gave to the neighborhood of gracious homes on winding roads, but today it is known as the Kibbe tract.

Construction slowed with the coming of the Great Depression, but side streets continued to be built off Longmeadow Street. The 1938 town report includes a street map of Longmeadow that shows



Nearly One-half Our Lots at $145 Each.

.. Size of Lots 40 Feet Front and 100 Feet or more in Depth.

PRICES AND TERMS.

$ 25	Lots Cost	$2.	Down and	$ .25c	Weekly.
50	" "	2.	" "	.50c	"
85	" "	2.	" "	.85c	"
125	" "	2.	" "	1.00	"
145	" "	2.	" "	1.25	"
225	" "	2	" "	1.50	"

Monthly or Quarterly Payments Arranged if Desired.

A DISCOUNT OF TEN PER CENT. ALLOWED FOR CASH.

WE WILL PAY YOUR TAXES UNTIL DEED IS GIVEN

WE REQUIRE NO NOTES OR MORTGAGES

CASH PRIZES TO BUILDERS.

IMPORTANT—READ CAREFULLY. In order to encourage building and insure a more rapid growth of "The Elms," thus enhancing the value of each purchaser's interest, we will give the following cash prizes to home builders. To the customer who builds the first house at "The Elms," costing not less than $1,000 provided he commences the same before July 15, 1897, and completes the same before November 15, we will give $200 in cash the moment the house is completed. To the second under same conditions, $175; to the third, $150; to the fourth, $125; to the fifth, $100; and to the next 55 builders, $75 each under above conditions.

FREE ELECTRIC CAR FARE.

As a further inducement to build and reside at "The Elms," we will give to the head of every family purchasing a lot, building and residing at "The Elms," providing it is commenced before July 15, and completed before Nov. 15, free electric car transportation from "The Elms" to Springfield and return for one year. This guarantee covers one fare each way a day.

FREE LIFE INSURANCE.

Each purchaser's life is insured on first payment, for full amount of purchase, provided he or she is in good health at the time of said purchase. That is, should purchaser die at any time before payments have been completed, provided said payments have never been more than thirty days in arrears, we will give to his or her heirs, a deed to property without further cost.

Hard sell for "The Elms" where "all improvements" were free

Houses were so often put on rollers and moved that Longmeadow has been called the "town of walking houses."

few roads in the eastern part of town. At the north end there are no streets east of Burbank Road except Converse and Williams streets and Bliss and Dwight roads. The only roads east of Shaker Road are those in Glen Arden and "Rowe Road," today's Wolf Swamp Road.

Construction continued to be minimal during the war years of the 1940s. The explosion in the building of single-family dwellings came in the 1950s and 1960s, when the number of building permits reached an average of about 125 per year. The construction brought about a 1952 change in the zoning bylaws which increased frontage requirements and lot sizes for new homes. The office of the building commissioner became a full-time position in 1962.

Planning board decisions made in 1955 helped shape the portion of the town that was still undeveloped. A crosstown road was laid out in the undeveloped eastern part of town and named for Frank Smith, the town clerk who served from 1919 to 1957. The road has not become the thoroughfare envisioned by the planners because it was constructed in sections as the housing lots were sold and was

SPECIAL TOWN MEETING - AT THE COMMUNITY HOUSE

Tuesday, June 26, 1928 at 8 o'clock P. M.

To act on the following:

1. To see if the Town will accept Dover Road, Harwich Road and Chatham Road.
2. To see if the Town will set aside as parks certain areas in the center of Fairfield Terrace.
3. To see if the Town will vote to pay the expense of the electric current for the Street Lights in that portion of the streets of the Colony Hills Tract lying within the Town, and appropriate $500.00 therefor.
4. To see if the Town will re-establish the grade of Laurel Street from Ellington Street to Shaker Road.
5. To hear the report of the Committee to Procure Plans and Estimates for a new Center School.
6. To see if the Town will vote to build, furnish and equip a new Center School, appropriate $125,000 therefor and determine how the amount appropriated shall be raised.
7. To see if the Town will appoint a Committee to build and equip the proposed Center School.
8. To see if the Town will authorize the School Building Committee to sell or dispose of the present Center School and McCombe house.
9. To see if the Town will appropriate $220.00 for a new safe for the Town Office.

F. E. SMITH
Town Clerk of Longmeadow, Mass.

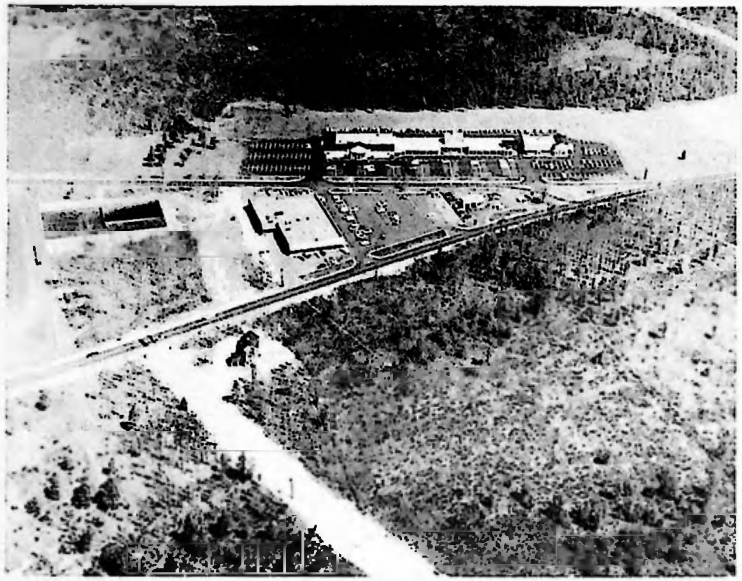
Penny postcard reminder for special town meeting in 1928 reflects expansion.

completed only in 1981.

The planning board also set aside two areas as commercial zones, one at the intersection of Maple and Shaker roads, the other at the intersecting V of Bliss Road and Williams Street. Business in Longmeadow had been confined to several small centers along Longmeadow Street, except for the many offices in individual homes. Service stations were soon opened in each of the new business zones. In 1960 the Popular Market, now the Big Y, opened on Bliss Road, and the Trading Post shopping center was built at the Shaker Road site. The Longmeadow Shops on Bliss Road opened in 1962, a center of ten shops designed in colonial style to suit the town's traditional atmosphere. Twenty-three businesses had opened in a two-year period; as a result, there was concern that Longmeadow would lose its residential nature. The convenience of neighborhood shopping seems to have outweighed that concern, however; even with additional shopping space added at Bliss and Williams in 1967 and 1983, residential growth has been unhampered.

The burgeoning construction moved east along the existing town roads. Kay Vee Realty Company, owned by Norman B. Keddy and George Vadnais, built many homes along Wolf Swamp Road and its neighboring streets to the south. It was a popular Sunday pastime to take a drive to see the new houses going up in that deserted part of the town.

Construction in 1958 of an interstate highway, Route 91, along the meadowland at the western edge of Longmeadow indirectly affected the residential development of the eastern part of town. In a trucking operation that went on through the summer and into November, 1.5 million yards of fill were taken from the "sand mountains" of Williams Street to build up the roadbed. Even while the sand hauling was going on, builders were advancing into the area with new home construction. Richard A. McCullough began the planning and construction of Merriweather Heights in 1958, and by 1962 construction of the houses on Viscount, Caravelle, and the north end of Merriweather Drive was completed. Flowery names such as Primrose and Magnolia were given to other streets that developed near Williams Street.



The shopping complex at the intersection of Williams Street and Bliss Road, built in a largely uninhabited area, was surrounded by houses within a decade.

Not too long ago residents picked blueberries where these Lawrence Drive homes now stand.

With the addition of six new businesses in 1983, the complex has become even busier.

Some of today's last available building lots are on Williamsburg Drive.

Blueberry Hill Road and its neighboring streets of Concord, Coventry, and Salem were developed, with many colonial homes built by David T. Whyte. Joseph Chapdelaine had been building homes in Longmeadow since the 1930s, and he participated in the eastward expansion with the development of Tanglewood and Pinewood drives. Academy Drive and its neighboring streets, named for Northfield, Deerfield, and Williston academies, were developed by Larry LaRoche during the 1960s and 1970s.

In the 1970s the town was nearly saturated with single-family housing, and construction of multifamily housing was about to begin. The Jewish Nursing Home of Western Massachusetts completed a building at 770 Converse Street, and today it provides shelter and care for 200 people. In 1975 a corporation was formed by five local religious congregations and Better Homes of Springfield. The corporation, Interfaith Homes of Longmeadow, is responsible for Emerson Manor, a sixty-eight-unit residential community for senior citizens at 114 Emerson Road. Construction of the apartment complex was started in October 1979, and all units were occupied by October 1980.

After a building boom that lasted for twenty years the number of building permits dropped to about 68 per year in the 1970s, and the decline continues. The town which had 194 dwellings in 1900 now has 5,150, but only 15 of those were added in 1982. The natural contours of the land have assured Longmeadow of many acres of unspoiled land on the meadows and in the small ravines known as "dingles." Turner, Bliss, and Greenwood parks and the country clubs provide other parklands. Open space for real estate development has become a scarce commodity in the town, and new home construction has become increasingly rare.

Owner Gene Kriener relaxes with patrons at Turner Park.

Turner Park

IN THE LATE nineteenth century a restaurant was built on a small lake near the eastern end of Williams Street. Designed to resemble a Rhineland chalet, the structure and its surroundings were sold early in the twentieth century to the Springfield Turnverein, a German social club. The chalet became the headquarters for the summer outings of club members, known as Turners, who rode the No. 17 trolley from Springfield to East Longmeadow and walked over to swim and picnic on the shores of the present-day Turner Park Lake.

In 1927 the chalet was purchased by Eugene Joseph Kriener, a native of Westphalia, Germany, and his wife Frieda. The Krieners renamed the restaurant Turner Park Hofbrau, and an era of Bavarian-style entertainment, delicious German-American food, and family fun began.

The staff of Turner Park Hofbrau in 1956.

Turner Park is a name that evokes pleasant memories for Longmeadow's old-timers. Many activities were available for fun and frolic, and outdoor clambakes were given by many clubs and companies. Gatherings of 1,000 were not unheard of. Swimming and boating on the lake and such games as bowling at the hand-set bowling alley added to the enjoyment.

The restaurant was open year-round and had menu offerings ranging from pig's knuckles to fresh seafood to tenderloin steak. Gene Kriener was the chef until the job was assumed by his son Bill in the 1950s. Enjoyment of the food was enhanced by live entertainment and dance music. As concerned parents wrung their hands and wondered, Longmeadow's youth danced the black bottom in the 1920s and the jitterbug in the 1940s. Sing-alongs led by Gene and later Bill, in full Bavarian costume, included such oldies as "I Want a Gal," "When You and I Were Young, Maggie," and "Ach Du Lieber Augusten."

The Hofbrau grew in popularity and attracted patrons from all of western Massachusetts and northern Connecticut. It was not uncommon to see the Dead End Kids of cinema fame enjoying themselves there. The English comedian Siro Smite always dropped by when he was in the United States. Many things attracted partygoers to Turner Park, not the least of which was a fully stocked bar. If rumors are true, a libation was available when Carrie Nation's philosophy ruled the land.

The original building was destroyed by a spectacular fire in March 1947. There were no hydrants in the rural area, so firemen drew water from the lake until the hoses became clogged with fish. Residential zoning ordinances did not permit rebuilding, but the good times and traditions continued in other buildings that existed on the property. When the restaurant closed in 1968, the town purchased the land for park and recreational purposes.

Longmeadow Becomes a Suburb

9

Town Government

Postal service in 1908. After the Longmeadow Post Office was closed in 1905, mail was delivered from Springfield. Today East Longmeadow serves Longmeadow.

THE BASIC STRUCTURE of the government in Longmeadow is that of the earliest New England settlements. Since the seventeenth century, when they were residents of Springfield, our citizens have had the town meeting form of government. Now, as then, selectmen are the executive branch of government, and the town meeting is the legislative body. The framework has remained unchanged over the years, but the infrastructure has grown to reflect the changing needs of a growing, modern society.

Longmeadow historians have taken pride in the fact that the meadow families provided selectmen to govern eighteenth-century Springfield. The tradition of public service by townspeople continues. Three citizens serve as selectmen while engaged in other full-time occupations. With the five volunteer members of the appropriations committee, they oversee the $16 million budget that operates the town.

One of the selectmen carries the title of fence viewer, a vestige from the days when good fences kept livestock from wandering through the town. Modern selectmen's meetings are transmitted to homes of the town over the public access channel of cable televi-

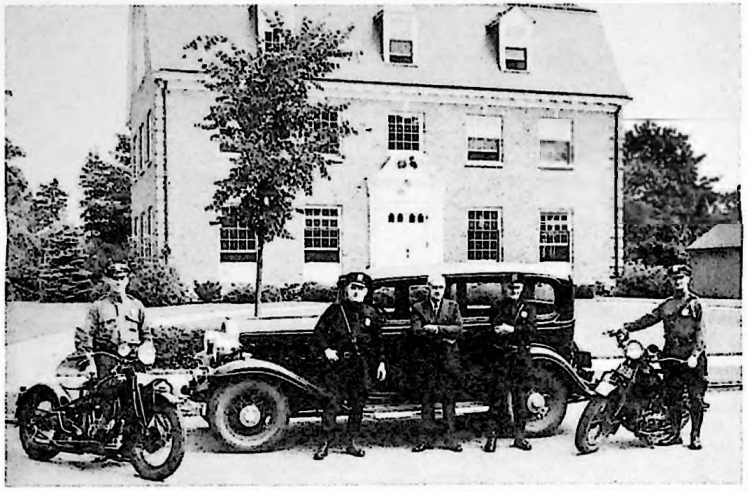
sion. Concerns of today's selectmen range from the acquisition of a computer system for the town to the allocation of limited monies among the many town departments.

The open town meeting is Longmeadow's legislative body. Every registered voter has the right to attend the duly posted gatherings, to vote on budgets, and to discuss and take action on other articles of business that appear on a warrant. The election of town officials was once a function of the town meeting but is now accomplished by means of a full day's polling at the Community House. Annual town meetings are held in the high school gymnasium, auditorium, and cafeteria, as needed to accommodate the voters. As the town has become so large that all voters cannot participate in a single meetingplace, there have been periodic suggestions that the government form be changed. Tradition has prevailed; the meeting gathers; and the business of the town is accomplished.

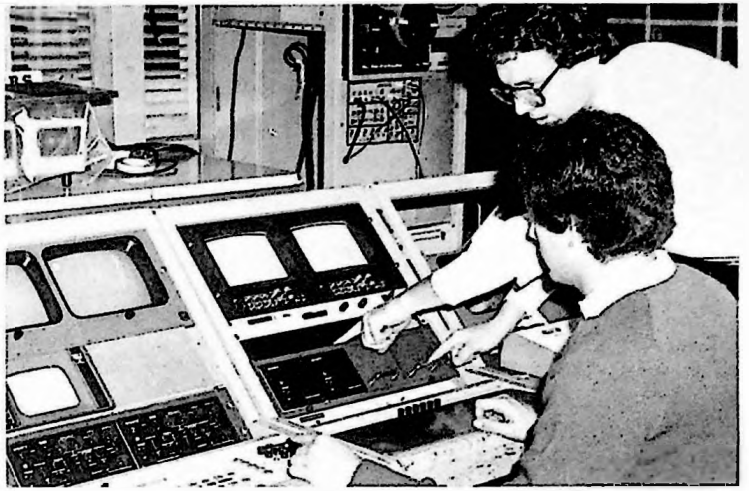
The building that houses town business looks as traditional as its New England setting. Patterned after the eighteenth-century home of "Marchant" Colton, it was built in 1930. The business of Longmeadow was previously conducted in today's American Legion/Council on Aging building. Today sixteen employees of the selectmen; the clerk; and the assessors, building, and accounting departments work in the town hall. The streets and engineering and water departments are located in the colonial brick police and fire headquarters building.

The police department has had several homes over the years: the old school and town hall at 417 Longmeadow Street, the basement of the present town hall, and since 1960 the police and fire headquarters next door to the town hall. Before the formation of the department in 1920 the town was policed by elected constables and special officers. Traffic control was the primary duty of the early policeman, a difficult and dangerous task much eased by the installation in 1928 of the first traffic lights on Longmeadow Street. Growth in the department has kept pace with that of the town. The whole police force was photographed for the sesquicentennial souvenir book: five men, one car, and two motorcycles. Such a photograph today would include a staff of thirty, officers and secretary, six cars,

Retiring Selectman Robert Thomas at left is toasted by Selectmen Ann Southworth and Adolph Jakobek in March, 1983.



The sesquicentennial photograph of the police force taken in 1933.



Public access cable television is manned primarily by volunteers.

Longmeadow's police force has been very active in teaching children about safety.

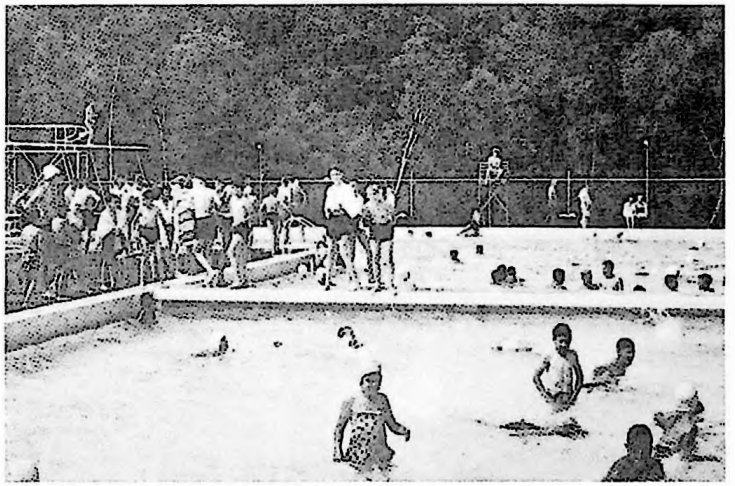
Firemen demonstrate how to control a cellar fire with modern techniques.

and an ambulance. There are seven reserve officers. The four patrol cars are generally on duty patrolling the 100 miles of town roads, and residents rely on immediate response to their calls for assistance. When the Longmeadow police reported a first armed robbery early in the 1970s, the event was carried on the national wire services. The quiet days of the motorcycle officers have gone, but Longmeadow is still a town in which residents feel safe to be on the streets at any hour.

Early in this century Longmeadow's fire protection consisted of eight fire hoses stored at designated locations in the town. When needed they would be pulled to the scene of a fire and operated by townspeople. The acquisition of motorized equipment and the residential growth of the town dictated the formation of the fire department in 1923. A volunteer force served the needs of the town until 1959. Firefighters were called by a coded alarm that sounded from the station at the corner of Belleclaire and Longmeadow streets. The fire department moved into its present quarters in 1960 when the town created a full-time fire department, now staffed with seventeen full-time firefighters and another twenty who are on call. The department's average response time of two minutes, and an inspection service made easily available to residents, contribute to the low fire losses recorded annually in the town.

The Community House is the home of the department of parks and recreation, which provides activities for the leisure time of townspeople. An early function of the parks commission was the purchase of the Green for the town. The sum of fifty dollars was appropriated for that purpose in 1900. Summer recreation programs for the children of the town have been in place since the 1930s, and continue today, with swimming instruction at the two town pools and day camps for children from preschool to middle-school age. After-school programs are coordinated with the school department, as are course offerings for adults. Volunteer associations for baseball, hockey, tennis, soccer, and lacrosse have the sponsorship of the department. The recreational director of earlier years was replaced in 1965 with today's director of parks and recreation.

The Recycling Commission sponsors weekly collection of newspapers, bottles, and aluminum cans.

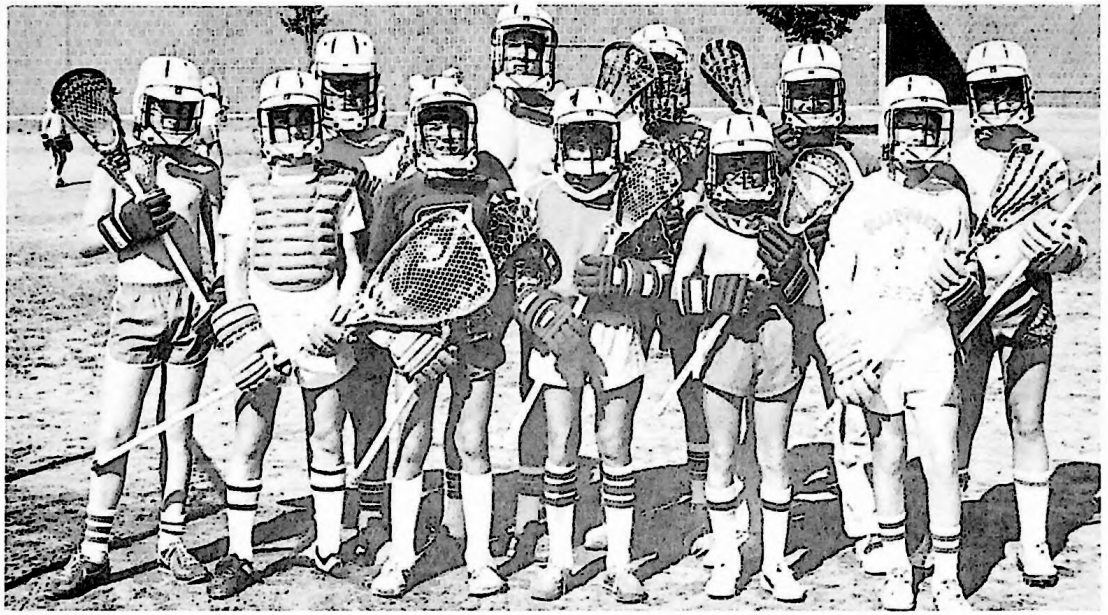


Before the Greenwood Park Pool, Bliss Pool was known as the Longmeadow Swimming Pool.

The Longmeadow Conservation Commission, authorized by the town meeting in 1962, is a board of seven residents charged with acquiring and administering conservation land for the town. The commission has the responsibility for nearly 450 acres, mostly the meadowlands on the riverbank, now called wetlands and the floodplain. The commission administers the Massachusetts Wetlands Protection Act.

The newest governmental service in Longmeadow is provided by the Council on Aging. Required by the Massachusetts Department of Elder Affairs, the council existed for years with a "no needs" budget. With funding and with a committed director, it has been operating for several years out of the American Legion building at 417 Longmeadow Street. Program costs and the salary of the executive director are borne by town, state, and federal funds. The council coordinates many services for citizens over sixty years of age, from a hot lunch program to health clinics to minibus transportation. Noontime at the council offices is a time for fellowship and advice from outside speakers on subjects ranging from home insulation to income taxes.

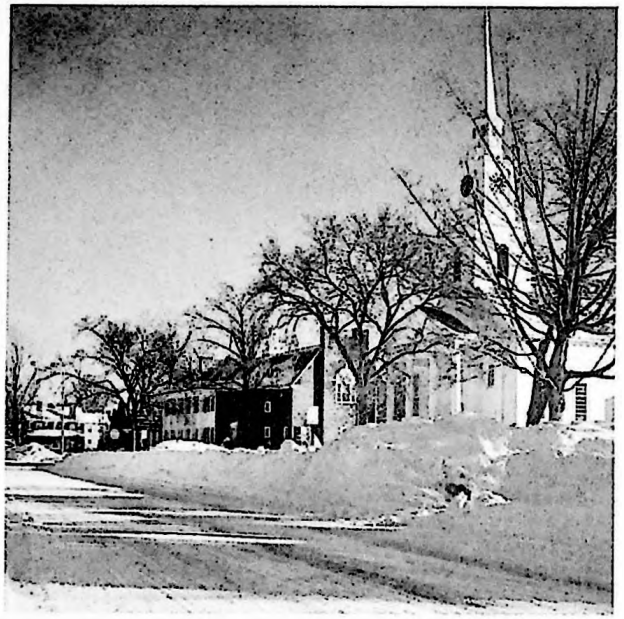
The government of Longmeadow has grown from the selectmen and constables prescribed in our town's early bylaws to become the largest employer in Longmeadow. Longmeadow is governed by 25 elected officials and many more who serve on appointed committees. The 733 full- and part-time employees of the schools and the departments discussed here commit their time to meeting the needs of town residents. The loyalty of townspeople to Longmeadow as a home in the past and the present shows that the town is well served by its government.



In Longmeadow, lacrosse starts early. This formidable group is suited up for the Parks and Recreation Department program.

10

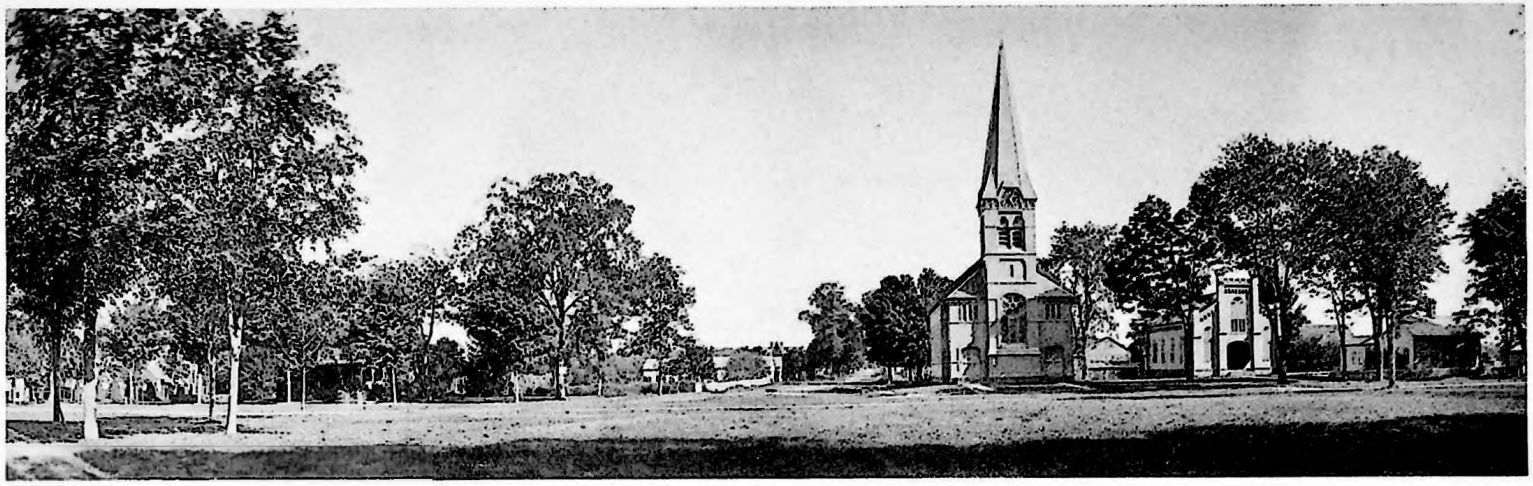
Religion: The Six Modern Congregations



OUR EARLY SETTLERS were deeply religious people, and their commitment to God has been echoed in various forms as new people moved to Longmeadow and built their churches and synagogues. The religious congregations in Longmeadow share an appreciation of the beauty of their town and a desire to contribute to the life of the community as a whole. Lectures, dinners, picnics, plays, and various festivals reach out from individual congregations to invite community participation. There has been a spirit of ecumenism here, with Protestants contributing to build the Catholic church and Catholics lending a hand to Protestants. The leaders of all the religious congregations in Longmeadow have come together to participate in the Interfaith Council and support such activities as feeding the hungry and providing a new start for refugee families locating in the area.

The First Church of Christ, 1716

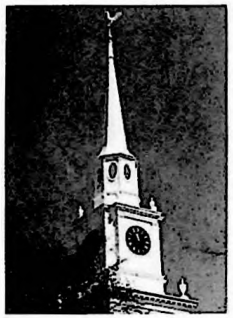
In the beginning the story of First Church was the story of Longmeadow. The establishment of Longmeadow in 1713 as a separate parish or precinct within Springfield was done essentially



From 1874 until 1932 First Church was a gothic style building. The chapel at the right was moved twice and finally torn down in 1930.

so that Longmeadow residents could form their own church. They were to continue to pay for the maintenance of Springfield's minister until they were able to provide themselves with a "Learned Orthodox Minister"; that meant one who followed the Calvinist beliefs and practices which were the basis of the Congregational churches early established throughout New England.

As mentioned in an earlier chapter, the "Learned Orthodox Minister" turned out to be Stephen Williams, a young Harvard College graduate who had yet to be ordained when the people of Longmeadow decided to call him to be their first minister. On October 17, 1716, Stephen Williams was ordained, and nine men signed the covenant which began the First Church of Christ in Longmeadow.



The first meeting house, a building that combined secular and religious functions, was built on the Green just west of where today's church is. The second meeting house was built in 1767-1769 to the north of the first one which was then torn down. This second meeting house forms the basic structure of the current church building. It was extensively remodeled in 1828 and again in 1874 when it was moved off the Green to its present site. The church was a brown gothic-style building from 1874 until 1932 when it was remodeled to its current colonial style.

The second minister of First Church was Richard Salter Storrs, who started the Sunday school. His second wife is generally credited with having started the Women's Benevolent Society. This group began in 1803 as the Female Missionary Association of Longmeadow. It has functioned under various names but is still in existence today, lending support to missionary activities both in this country and abroad. Missionaries from Longmeadow in the 1800s went to Greece, Turkey, Syria, West Africa, India, and China, as well as to Utah, the Rocky Mountains, Virginia, Tennessee, and Mississippi.

The church owns many historical artifacts which help tell the history of early Longmeadow. Three items of which the community is probably most aware are the weather vane, the church bell, and the clock on the steeple. No one is sure when the weathercock (rooster) arrived, but it is believed to have been made in England and brought here before 1800. The church bell was purchased in 1809 from Paul Revere in Boston. In 1815 the bell was rung so violently

in celebration of the ending of the War of 1812 that it was badly cracked and had to be recast, but this recast bell is still in use today. At the time of the 1874 remodeling of the church, Henry M. Clark of Boston donated the steeple's Howard clock in memory of his mother, Hannah Bliss Clark, who was born and brought up in Longmeadow.

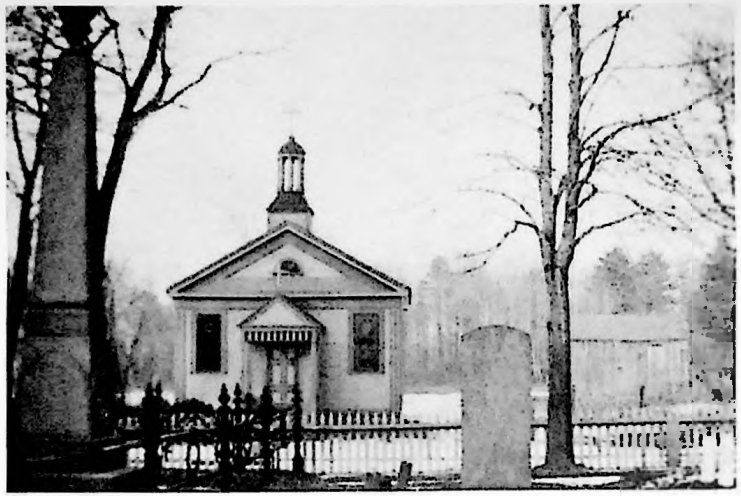
In 1869 First Church had its first May Breakfast. Conceived as a fundraiser and held in the chapel, this all-day affair became a major social event for the community. Flowers decorated the chapel, and church members waited on tables serving food to the guests and selling cakes and pies to be taken home. Cold turkey, shad and shad roe, chicken pie, lobster salad, rhubarb pie, coconut pie, and "Longmeadow loaf cake" were sold and consumed in vast quantities. The recipes for these dishes were written to serve crowds and were passed on from generation to generation.

The chapel where the May Breakfasts were held was for a long time the only assembly hall in town. Built in 1853 on the site of today's church, it was moved twice and was finally torn down in 1930 to make way for the town hall. Town meetings, club receptions, concerts, lectures, as well as church activities took place in the chapel. During World War I, activity there increased, with Red Cross projects, canning clubs, and Liberty Loan drives. It was apparent that the town as well as the church needed a meeting hall. With a large bequest to the church from Miss Emerett Colton (1833-1917) and funds solicited from the entire town, a new community hall was constructed. It was built on church property but leased to the town in 1923; four years later the town purchased the Community House and property from the church.

First Church was incorporated in 1891. Changes since then in the church organization and bylaws mainly affect the financial and property-owning aspects of church life. The Congregational Church has always had a fundamental belief that individual churches should govern themselves. On January 18, 1961, First Church voted to approve the constitution of the United Church of Christ. This constitution continued to protect the independence of local churches and brought little noticeable change to the church in Longmeadow.

The Cradle Roll of the First Church in 1909.

The burying yard behind First Church was laid out at the beginning of the eighteenth century.



The original St. Mary's Church building was a small chapel on Williams Street.

St. Mary's Church, 1868

There were few Catholics in Longmeadow before the Civil War, and like the Protestants before them early Catholics had to travel to Springfield for church services. By 1868, however, the Catholic community in Longmeadow was large enough to form its own parish. A group of five men purchased a building that is believed to have been a spectacle shop located across the Green from First Church. They moved the building to Williams Street opposite the eastern end of the cemetery, and there, on October 2, 1870, it was dedicated as St. Mary's Church.

By 1887 St. Michael's Church in East Longmeadow had been built, and there followed a period in which St. Mary's shared the services of priests with St. Michael's. Father Anthony Dwyer came to St. Michael's Church in 1894 and began commuting between St. Michael's and St. Mary's. At first he purchased a horse and buggy and a sleigh and drove through the woods from East Longmeadow to Longmeadow each Sunday. He alternated saying mass at St. Michael's and St. Mary's at 8:00 A.M. and 10:00 A.M. When it became too expensive to keep the horse, he sold it and hired one each Sunday for his trip.

St. Michael's was the bigger parish and grew faster than St. Mary's, probably because the quarries were attracting many workers to East Longmeadow during the 1890s. But by 1910 the number of St. Mary's parishioners was increasing significantly; the little church was so crowded that at mass the children had to sit around the altar, in the sacristy, before the front pews, and even out on the steps. Father Richard D. Murphy, who was then pastor at East Longmeadow, is credited with enabling St. Mary's to become an independent parish. He helped acquire the present site for St. Mary's and worked to accumulate the funds necessary to build a new church. The women of the parish formed St. Mary's Guild in 1924 with the enormous mission of raising the money for this project. That year Father Murphy purchased a portable church from a Connecticut parish, and in November St. Mary's was moved from its first location on Williams Street to the portable church that had been set up on Bliss Road behind the site of the present St. Mary's. It was almost six years before the parish was able to break ground for its new church, but on Christmas Eve of 1931 St. Mary's on Longmeadow Street was opened with a midnight mass.

In the early 1900s the parish frequently organized lawn parties on property owned by Charles Ward on Williams Street just beyond the present police station. The homes of Charles Ward and the Moynahans were headquarters for these affairs, which lasted for a week at a time. Each night supper was served, and booths offered games of chance, darts, and other activities. Williams Street would be strung with Japanese lanterns and the Brightside Band would arrive via trolley from the Brightside Orphanage. The whole town enjoyed these parties as they did the May Breakfasts of First Church.

In 1937, when Father Richard J. Lawless became resident priest, St. Mary's had only one stained-glass window; it came from Munich

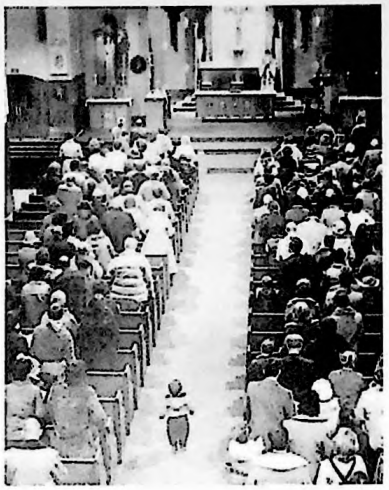
and was the gift of Dennis and Ellen Manning, who lived on Bliss Road. It was placed in the church so that this generous and elderly couple could see it from their home. One Sunday morning Father Lawless mentioned at each mass that perhaps someday the other large windows might be replaced by stained glass. The results of his remarks amazed him, for by that afternoon various families in the parish promised stained glass for each of these windows.

In 1967 St. Mary's School opened with the Sisters of St. Joseph teaching kindergarten through grade 4. By 1971 the school encompassed kindergarten through grade 8. The school building has been used for the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine program, adult education classes, athletic programs, discussion groups, and for meetings of the parish council and executive board. Extra masses, lectures, movies, teas, fashion shows, suppers, and parish plays have been held there. Both the Montessori school and the Willie Ross School for the Deaf have rented sections of St. Mary's School for their activities.

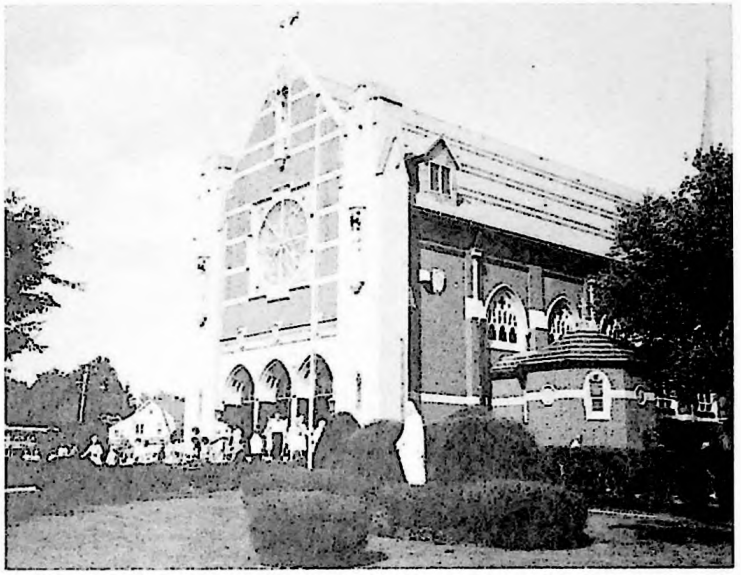
In recent years St. Mary's monthly parish newsletter has reported on the activities of the Altar Society, the altar boys, St. Mary's Guild, the Bible study group, and the basketball teams. Events such as the annual family picnic in the fall are heralded in *St. Mary's Messenger*, as are meetings of the increasingly popular Tuesday Mothers' Morning Out, a group providing sociability as well as religious education for women of the community.

In 1983 the church underwent a complete redecorating and refurbishing. A circular della Robbia ten feet in diameter was placed in the sanctuary; designed especially for St. Mary's, this beautiful work of art depicts the life of the Virgin Mary.

In 115 years St. Mary's has changed from a small group of worshipers struggling to provide physical facilities for their congregation to a large, well-established church. In the process, St. Mary's has reached out to answer the needs of its parishioners and to participate in the community life of Longmeadow.



During an ecumenical Christmas celebration in 1982, carolers stopped at St. Mary's for a short service.



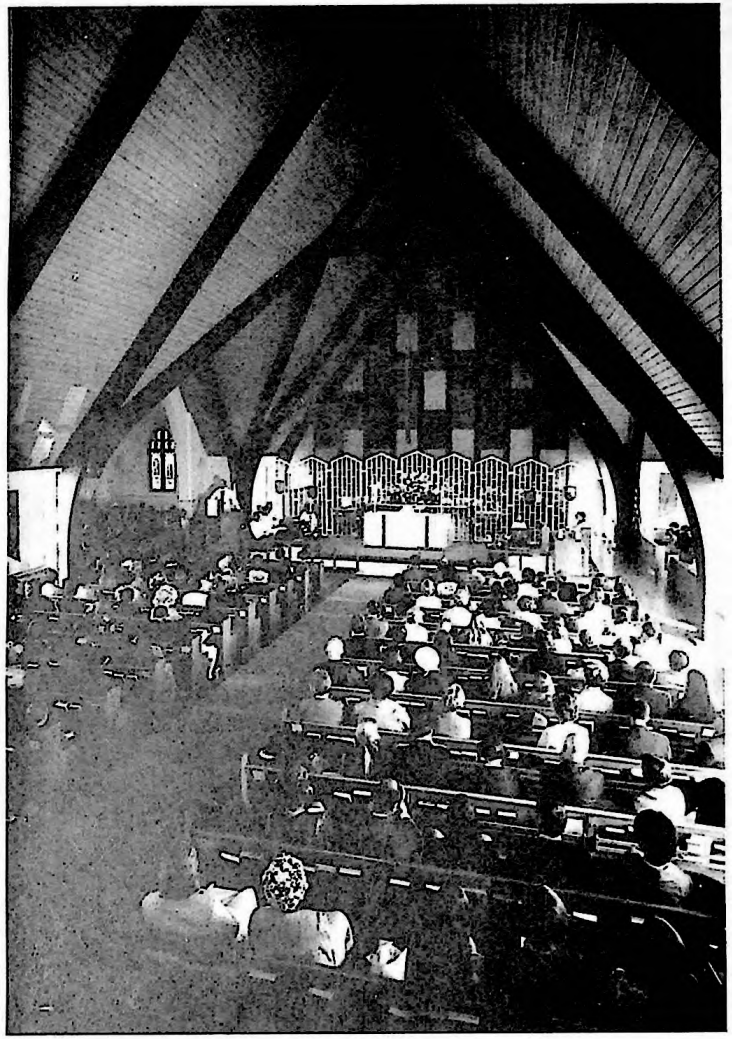
In 1983 the present St. Mary's Church underwent major refurbishing and redecorating.

St. Andrew's started in a store on the corner of Edgewood Avenue and Longmeadow Street.

St. Andrew's Episcopal Church, 1921

In the early part of this century Longmeadow Episcopalians were going to church in Springfield, either to Christ Church Cathedral or the All Saints' Church off Sumner Avenue. It was not until 1921 that the St. Andrew's congregation started regular worship services in Longmeadow as a mission church sponsored by the cathedral in Springfield.

The church started in an empty store on the corner of Longmeadow Street and Edgewood Avenue. It had a potbellied stove for heat and a cabinet organ donated by the Church of the Good Shepherd in West Springfield. Average attendance was about twenty people under the care of the assistant rector from Christ Church Cathedral.



Today's congregation worships in a modern sanctuary that incorporates the older chapel with its stained glass at the left.

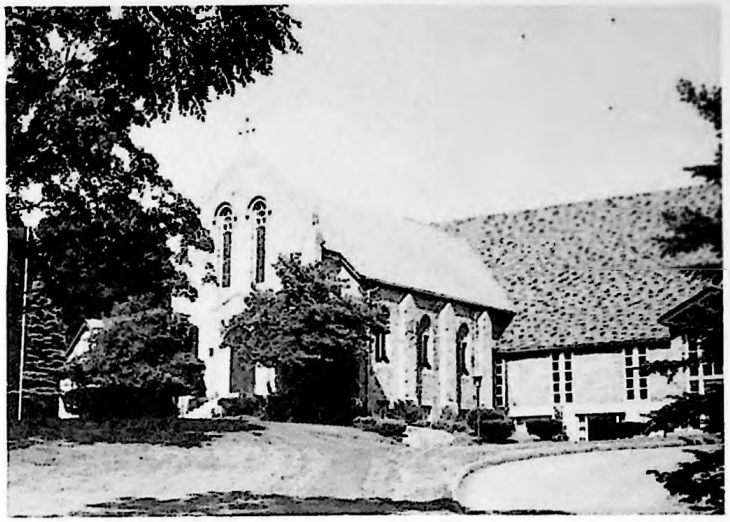
The first years of the church involved the struggle to provide physical facilities for the congregation. Eventually a parcel of land on a knoll was purchased from the estate of Dr. Hooker, and a building committee was established. On January 18, 1925, the small stone church building was dedicated by Bishop Thomas Davies.

In 1943, when Rev. Hadley Williams arrived, the parish purchased a home for their vicar on South Park Avenue. Hadley Williams was a bachelor when he came to Longmeadow, and his congregation watched as romance blossomed between him and Deborah MacBriar, a member of First Church. In June of that year the whole of St. Andrew's parish was invited to the wedding ceremony performed by the groom's brother, as well as the minister of First Church, and the Episcopal bishop of Springfield.

In May 1948 a new parish house was dedicated; it was only the basement part of a structure that would be built on in the 1950s, but it provided room for a children's chapel, several badly needed Sunday school rooms, and a study for the rector.

The 1950s were the years of the Christmas tree bonfires. On Twelfth Night parishioners brought their trees to the bank behind the church where they were lighted. As the fire burned, carols were sung, cocoa was served, and snowballs were thrown. The young people of the parish had a wonderful time. The fires were discontinued in 1970 as a gesture of cooperation in the effort to reduce air pollution. In their place a candlelight service was instituted which ended with all lights extinguished except one eucharistic candle on the altar. An acolyte brought light from that candle to each row of the congregation where parishioners holding individual small candles passed the flame from one to another. Then the congregation turned and left the church in a flood of candlelight.

The 1960s saw the completion of the St. Andrew's Church buildings as they stand today; the architecture of the new sanctuary ties together, physically and aesthetically, the original stone church and the more recent parish house. During the winter of 1962-63, Sunday services were held in the Longmeadow Community House until, on February 24, 1963, the first services were held in the completed church.



Exterior of St. Andrew's to-day.

The 1950s and 1960s were years of growth at St. Andrew's as they were in the town generally. The number of children in the Sunday school peaked during the 1960s and then began to decrease. However, the church was still so busy that in 1970 the first assistant rector was hired and new worship services were added to the church schedule. The 1970s saw the acceptance of women to the Episcopal priesthood, and in 1983 a women arrived to fill the position of assistant rector and became St. Andrew's first woman priest.

The First Church of Christ, Scientist, from 1924 until 1961.

The current First Church of Christ, Scientist

First Church of Christ, Scientist, 1924

The first Christian Science church service in Longmeadow was held on Sunday, August 24, 1924, in an unoccupied residence at 539 Longmeadow Street, currently the Hatch Memorial Library of Bay Path Junior College. The residence was later purchased by the group because it was large enough for the church, a Sunday school, and a reading room.

On December 5, 1924, the church gained recognition as a branch of The Mother Church, The First Church of Christ, Scientist, in Boston, headquarters for the worldwide activities of the Christian Science movement. The church in Longmeadow incorporated and was granted a certificate of organization on February 11, 1925.

Interest in Christian Science and a growing membership led to two major building projects. By February 1928 an extension on the southern side of the building was completed and put into use for church services. In 1940 the basement of the original building was remodeled to provide improved facilities for the growing Sunday school.

The dedication of a branch church is a public affirmation of the significance of church in the lives of Christian Scientists. Traditionally, this service is held when the church is debt free. Longmeadow's Christian Scientists held their dedication service on December 13, 1942.

In 1961 Bay Path Junior College expressed a desire to purchase the church building in order to transfer their library facilities there. The members of the church agreed to the sale, and late in the summer of 1962 construction was started on the present church at the corner of Williams Street and Redfern Drive (then Frank Smith Road).

The first service in the new church was held on Sunday morning, May 26, 1963. The new building included a Sunday school area where classes for young people up to age twenty meet. A public reading room is attached to the east side of the building. The reading room provides a quiet place to study the Bible and other literature related to the study and practice of Christian Science as well as a

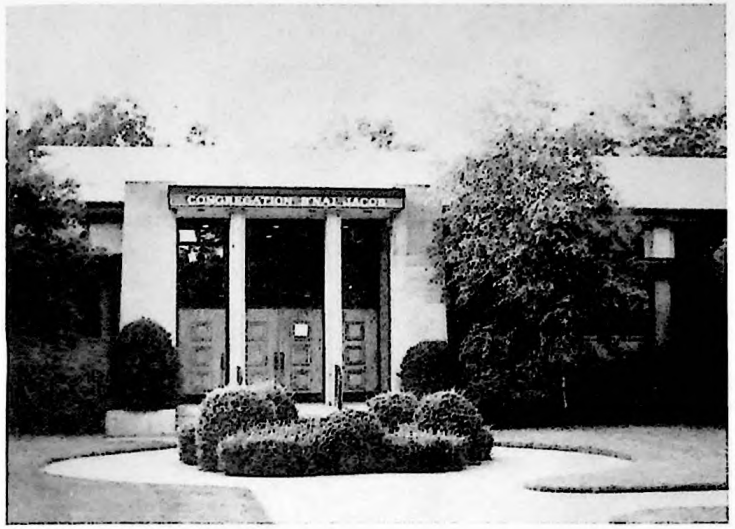
place to purchase books and pamphlets. In addition, the church sponsors at least one free community lecture each year in which the speaker shows the practicality of religion in providing solutions to everyday problems of all kinds. The new church was dedicated on Sunday, September 28, 1975, and continues to hold church services and Sunday school on a year-round basis.

Temple B'nai Jacob, 1963

The roots of Temple B'nai Jacob extend back to 1890 when a group of Springfield's Jewish people formed an Orthodox congregation. By 1920 the congregation was able to build a new brick synagogue on Congress Street in Springfield where they worshiped for over forty years.

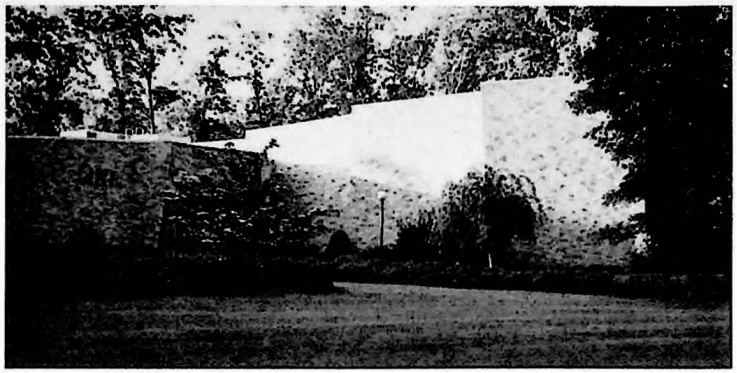
As the Jewish population moved away from the north end of Springfield, the leadership of Temple B'nai Jacob made the decision to follow its people to Longmeadow. In 1962-63 a beautiful new building was erected off Converse Street at the end of Eunice Drive. Much of the land and part of the building owned by the congregation are actually in Springfield. One of the features of the new building is the Holy Ark, which was brought from the old building and placed in the small chapel of the new one. Many of the present members of the congregation were married or celebrated their bar or bat mitzvah before that Ark.

A change in philosophy around 1966 led the congregation to join the Conservative movement in Judaism. Today, Temple B'nai Jacob runs a Sunday school and adult education program as well as having annual picnics, Sabbath suppers, rummage sales, and speakers whose talks are open to the community. An active Sisterhood provides tea and punch and baked goods after Friday night services and Kiddush after Saturday services. The Brotherhood provides a scholarship that helps to send a young person to Israel in the summer and a partial scholarship to send a child to camp for an intensive experience in learning Judaic culture.



Temple B'nai Jacob.

Interior of Beth Israel Synagogue at its completion in 1975.



Exterior of Beth Israel Synagogue.

Beth Israel Synagogue, 1975

In 1884 a handful of loyal Jewish immigrants gathered together to establish the first Jewish congregation in the city of Springfield, Massachusetts. On June 2, 1892, they formed a corporation at Graves Hall on Main Street and named it Beth Israel, or "The House of Israel," as it was listed in the city directory of the time. The congregation grew quickly and moved twice to accommodate their growing numbers. The first move was to a new building on Grey's Avenue. When these quarters were outgrown, a drive was launched to build a more spacious edifice in the heart of the Jewish residential area, then located in the north end of Springfield. A stately building was erected at 565 Chestnut Street, and starting in 1923 the congregation worshiped there.

Progressively weakened by the shift of the once large north end Jewish population to other parts of Springfield and neighboring communities, in the spring of 1972 the congregation faced up to the enormous challenge of rebuilding and revitalizing Beth Israel in a new residential area. This task was completed in the spring of 1975.

In its beautiful new building at 1280 Williams Street in Longmeadow, Beth Israel has enjoyed an influx of many new young families. Recently organized groups and activities include a newly formed Mr. and Mrs. Club; Late Friday evening Oneg Shabbat services; youth-conducted Shabbat and Yom Tov services; Sunday morning husband-wife breakfast services; and family education courses in which parents and children are involved in learning their respective roles in synagogue and home religious observances.

Many Longmeadow residents belong to churches and synagogues outside our town; those discussed here are important because they are physically located within our town and contribute significantly to the life of our community. A hundred years ago there were more churches in Longmeadow, because the town included what is today East Longmeadow. Five churches had been started in the East Village before Longmeadow and East Longmeadow went their separate ways. The First Baptist Church was organized in 1818 as a branch of an Enfield church. The First Congregational Church (United Church of Christ) was established in 1827 and known as the Second Congregational Church because the first one was on the Green in Longmeadow. The United Methodist Church was organized in 1853, and St. Michael's Roman Catholic Church came along in 1883. St. Paul's Lutheran Church was organized in 1890, and all its services were originally conducted in Swedish. The histories of these churches have been compiled in the East Longmeadow town history.

The many people who created today's modern town of Longmeadow have come from different religious backgrounds, so that the town now has six different congregations. Even with the choice of worship that exists, some people still look outside the town for a place of worship. Many Jewish residents travel to Springfield to the temples of Beth El, Sinai, or Kodimoh, and Greek-Americans worship at St. Luke's or St. George's Greek Orthodox churches. The clergy and laypeople of the congregations both in Longmeadow and outside the town work together in a spirit of ecumenism. The spiritual needs of all townspeople are as well met today as they were when Stephen Williams was the spiritual leader of all Longmeadow.

11

Education

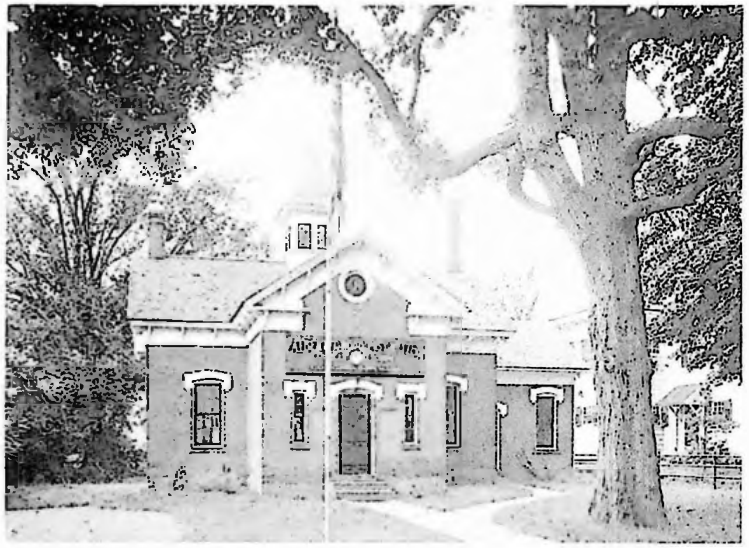
Older children in front of the District 1 schoolhouse, which stood on the site of the present Center School, in 1878.

EDUCATION has played a major role in the life of Massachusetts from its beginning. The original contract of the Massachusetts Bay Company specified that children of the settlers and Indians be educated to their utmost to further the ends of the Colony. As early as 1647 legislation required settlements to provide schools for the children.

There is some confusion about when the first primary school existed in Longmeadow. The first petition for a school was in 1703. In 1704 the town of Springfield voted "to allow 5 pounds to satisfy for schooling that has been carried on in Longmeadow the summer past." A school was officially allowed after the granting of precinct status, and in 1714 a precinct meeting voted to hire a schoolmaster. In 1717 the selectmen appointed four men "to handle school matters." James Gerald was hired to teach school in the same year, and the first schoolhouse was built.

In the early part of the eighteenth century only men were hired to teach. By 1739 women were permitted to teach during the spring and fall semesters to relieve men for planting and harvesting. Hannah Burt, the first woman teacher in Longmeadow, was paid forty shillings a month in the same year that John Williams, age nineteen,

The little red schoolhouse at the south end of Longmeadow Street served District 3.



Built as a schoolhouse in 1855 the building at 417 Longmeadow Street served District 2 until the turn of the century. It was the town hall from 1906 until 1930, then became the headquarters of the American Legion Post 175 and today also houses the Council on Aging.

was paid a monthly salary of three pounds and two shillings. A hundred years later, women were filling most Longmeadow teaching jobs.

In addition to grammar school, young men could be privately educated by Jabez Colton, a 1774 Yale graduate. The small school in his home at today's 1607 Longmeadow Street prepared young men to enter the university. Colton also served on the school committee of the town.

Three school districts soon developed in Longmeadow. The first district's "old brick" schoolhouse was near the meetinghouse on the Green. The "north school" of the second district served residents north of Wheelmeadow Brook. The third district was south of Longmeadow Brook, and its schoolhouse came to be known as the little red school house. Five additional school districts served the eastern part of Longmeadow that is now East Longmeadow.

Operating the schools was a very local task in nineteenth-century Longmeadow. The town's school committee was charged with visiting district schools and evaluating them, but the upkeep and staffing of schools were the responsibility of each school district. Educational quality was directly related to the teachers. The school committee reported of the District 3 school in 1856: "Much skill and ingenuity was exhibited in the efforts of the teacher to interest her pupils and the usually tedious monotony of the village school was in this case most successfully relieved." The same annual report states of another district: "The classes were faithfully drilled in the use of textbooks and if in some instances they appeared to recite by rote more than from the real comprehension of what they recited, this fact also observed in other schools does not detract from the general merits of the teacher or scholars."

Questions about the town schools might have encouraged private schools. There were four in Longmeadow during the latter half of the nineteenth century. Mr. Sanford Lawton had a school for boys, Miss Lucy Storrs a school for girls, and Miss Eastman a coeducational school. The most renowned private school was that of Mr. William Goldthwait. Goldthwait was editor of the popular journal, *Massachusetts Teacher*, and served on the Longmeadow school com-

mittee. His school had many boarding students from southern states, and the loss of those students with the coming of the Civil War led to the school's closing.

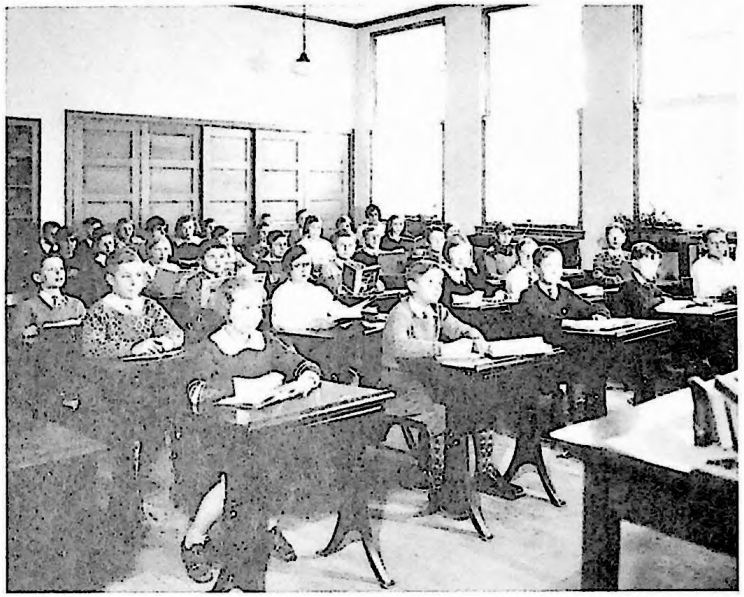
A state law passed in 1859 transferred the task of hiring teachers from the school districts to the town committee, now called the committee of visitation and examination. A more centralized hiring procedure was expected to improve teaching quality. In 1867 the town meeting voted to reject the district concept altogether, placing the whole school system under the care of the town school committee. All nine members of the school committee resigned; they had opposed the vote. A new committee of six was formed to reorganize the system.

Schools seem not to have changed much in the first 150 years of their presence in Longmeadow. In the centennial year of 1883, one-room schools operated in the north and south ends of the town. Young children learned in one room in the Center School, and a second room served as a "higher school" for older children of the town. Any further education was procured at parents' expense in the Springfield schools or at private schools. The town was proud of its schools, claiming in 1885 to spend more for each child between the ages of five and fifteen than any other town in the county.

The hiring of a superintendent in 1893 introduced a graded course of study, unity, and permanence to the schools of Longmeadow. After the separation of East Longmeadow, the school committee became a board of three townspeople, one elected yearly to a three-year term. Beginning in 1899, one of those three was generally a woman.

Changes came quickly as the twentieth century approached. The little red schoolhouse, located at today's 1482 Longmeadow Street, closed in 1893, its scholars sent to the Center School. In 1899 a magnificent new school was built in front of the two-room Center School, and two years later all Longmeadow students, grades 1 to 9, were in one school. There were 4 rooms, 4 teachers, and nearly 100 students. The arrangement seemed ideal. High school students fared well in Springfield's high schools, their tuition and trolley fare being paid by the town. Trolley fare was also supplied to youngsters

Postcard commemorated groundbreaking ceremonies for the Doane Orphanage, which stood at 17 Longmeadow Street from 1903 until 1930.



Students at the then new Center School in the late 1920s were serious and attentive.

Students at St. Mary's School learn to exercise their right to vote.

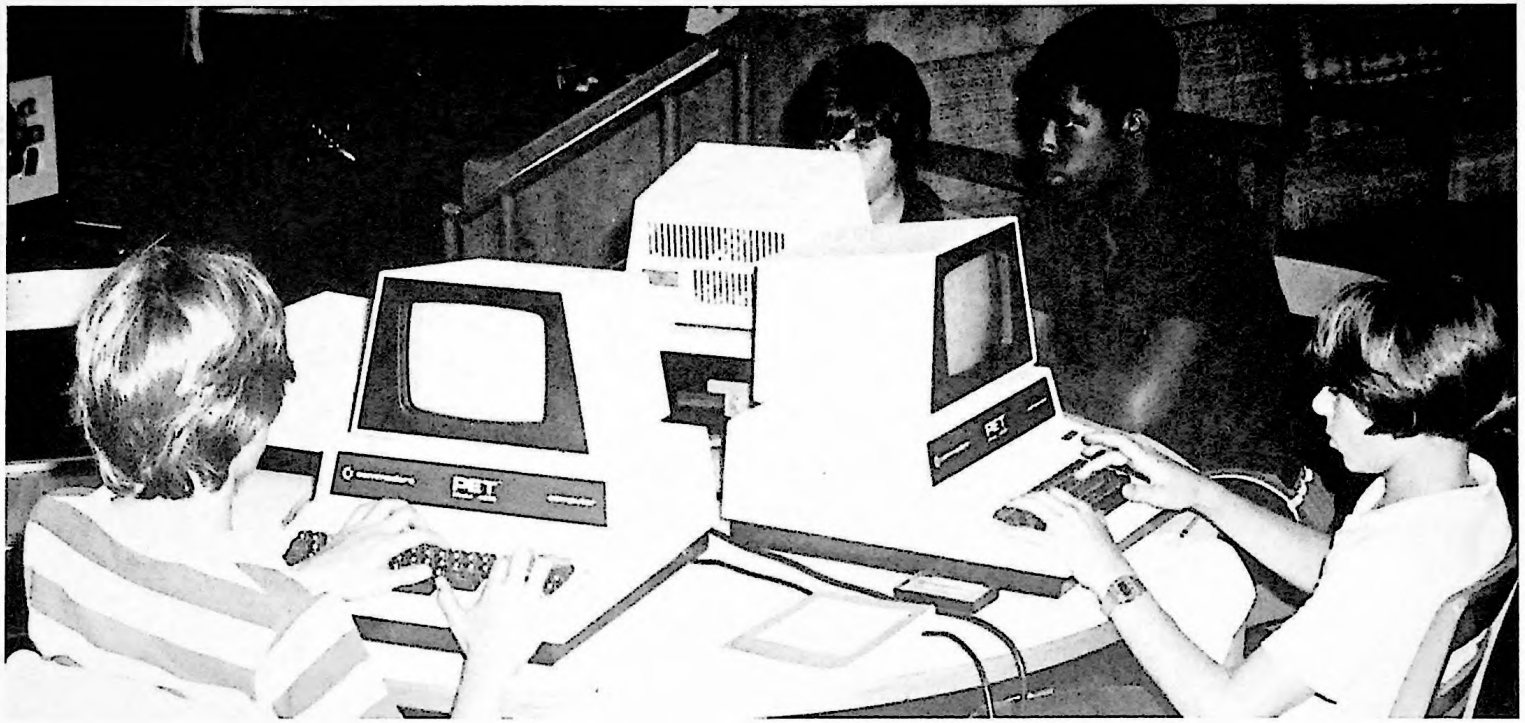
Off to the Senior Prom, a special occasion for the class of 1958. Longmeadow High School's second graduating class and the first to go through all grades in Longmeadow.

under ten years of age who lived more than a mile from school. Children from the Doane Home might have crowded the school, had not the orphanage opened its own school.

By 1910 there were 160 pupils, and the town sought to expand classroom space. The four-room Converse Street School opened in 1916; Norway Street School, in 1918. The ninth grade was dropped from the curriculum in 1916, in keeping with general educational practice. Older students were in junior high classes at Center School, in classrooms which were not designed for the emerging national philosophy of a junior high curriculum. Construction of a separate junior high school was approved the second time it was proposed, at the 1920 town meeting. A gala dedication was held in January 1922. Over 100 seventh-, eighth-, and ninth- graders occupied Longmeadow Junior High School at 811 Longmeadow Street in a building designed to house 350 students. The curriculum offered domestic science for girls and manual training for boys, and the school's gymnasium, lunchroom, and office space made it the pride of the town. The gambrel roof of the new school was patterned after the roof of the first brick schoolhouse on the Green.

The town continued to grow. In 1927 there were 707 students and indications of more to come. The Longmeadow Country Day School at 1087 Longmeadow Street offered private schooling for boys until the Depression came. A kindergarten for 30 children opened in 1927 in the Converse Street School in response to a petition from the Parent-Teacher Association and the Longmeadow Woman's Club. After the outdated Center School was replaced in 1929 with a new school at the site, today's Center School, Longmeadow schools were using about thirty classrooms. The sharing of a superintendent with Wilbraham, East Longmeadow, and Hampden had just ended with the hiring of a junior high school principal who also served as superintendent of schools. The next significant change in the operation of the system came when the superintendency became a full-time position in 1948.

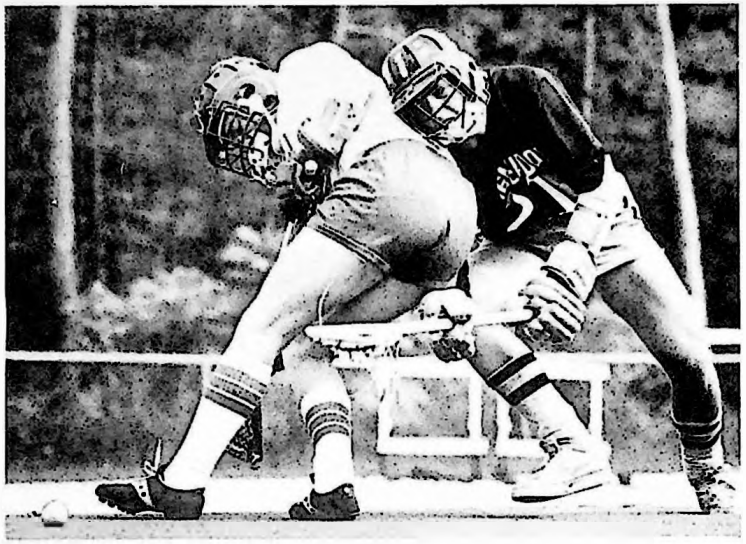
Springfield's Bay Path Institute moved to Longmeadow in 1945, opening a secretarial school in the three buildings of the Wallace estate at 588 Longmeadow Street. The Wallace home became Deep-



Longmeadow students are encouraged to develop sound computer skills.

wood Hall. There were 85 commuting students at the time. The first residence hall was opened two years later, and in 1949 the school became Bay Path Junior College. Today 682 women are enrolled in the fifteen courses of study leading to associate of arts or associate of science degrees. Bay Path owns all the property on the west side of Longmeadow Street between Wheelmeadow Drive and Emerson Road, Hatch Memorial Library, and properties on Arlington Road. The school has succeeded so well in maintaining the ambience of the street and the town that few passersby would guess that 150 employees work beyond the rolling green lawn.

The 1950s brought another decade of growth to the Longmeadow schools. Between 1951 and 1961 enrollment increased from 1,130 to 2,962. Early in the decade the school committee decided that Longmeadow should have a high school. Nearly 200 students were attending school in Springfield, their tuition paid by the town, and growth in the town indicated an increasing school population. Over 1,000 voters attended the February 5, 1953, town meeting in the Community House to act on the recommendation of the high school building committee. Some voters felt that Longmeadow would never have the student population to support a high school; others thought



In 1983 the Longmeadow High School Lancers won the state lacrosse championship.

Smiling faces and the tang of autumn air.

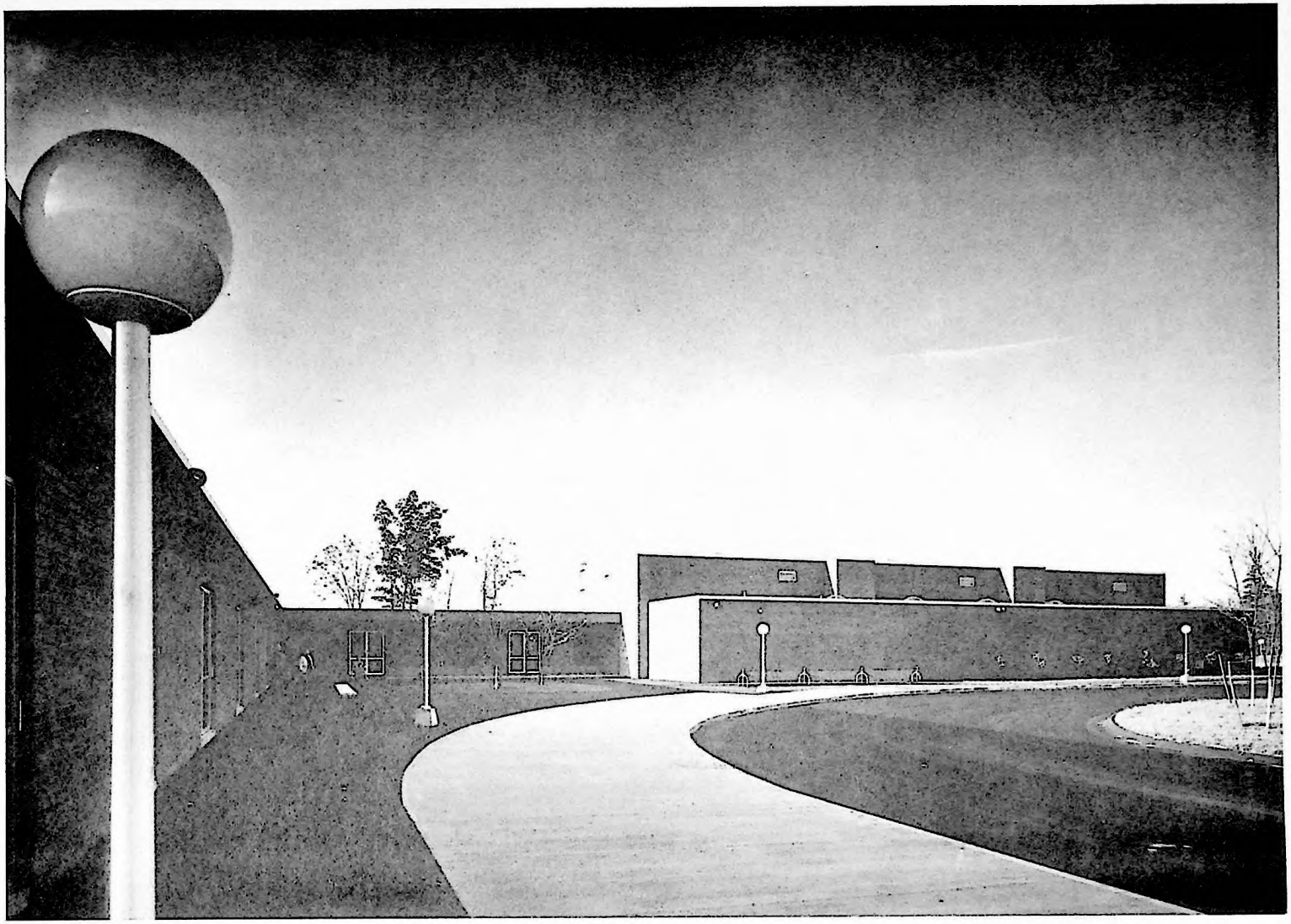
the amount of money to be expended on construction was too high. The vote was 577 in favor, 533 against the bond needed to build the school. A two-thirds vote was required for approval of the bond, so the school was not approved. A second high school proposal, scaled down from $2,000,000 to $1,575,000, was presented to a November 1953 town meeting. This unique town meeting resembled an election day. It was in session from noon to 9:00 P.M. Voters cast written ballots and left. A quorum of 50 voters was needed to keep the meeting in session, and 400 voters participated in maintaining the quorum by being present in shifts of an hour or more. The tally at the meeting's end was 1,444 in favor, 678 opposed. The high school would be built.

With responsibility for the high school added to school committee tasks, the committee was increased to 5 members in 1954. Another decade of growth was under way. The high school opened in 1955 with grades 9, 10, and 11. The class of 1956 graduated in Springfield. The first addition to the school was in place by 1958, indicating that the larger building initially presented to the town meeting might have been needed.

Wolf Swamp School opened in 1956, and Blueberry Hill School in 1957. The junior high school was replaced with a new school on Williams Street in 1960. Elementary classroom space was gained by converting the old junior high into the Center School Annex. High school space was gained by shifting the central administration from the high school to the Center Annex. The population was still rising.

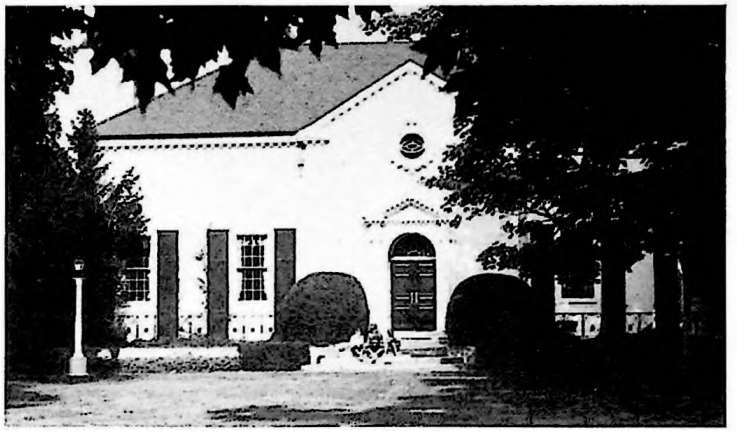
The opening of a parochial school by St. Mary's in 1967 took some students from the public schools. A new Greenwood Park School replaced Norway Street School in 1966. The middle school grouping of grades 6, 7, and 8 in one school was adopted with the opening in 1968 of Glenbrook Middle School. Additions were built to various schools throughout the 1960s; the last construction took place in 1974. The school committee increased its membership by adding two seats in 1969 to help direct the system of 4,229 pupils.

The practices of redistricting children, transporting selected classes from one building to another, and using spare corners for teaching stations gave way to empty classrooms as the enrollment in



The Glenbrook Middle School, Longmeadow's newest, opened in 1968 and won an award for its architectural design.

Longmeadow High School, opened in 1955 with an enrollment of 298 which peaked at 1,549 in 1978.



The Richard Salter Storrs Library erected in 1933.

available. Tuition is paid by the state. There are eighteen graduates of the program, and 54 students are presently enrolled. In 1973, ABC (A Better Chance) came to Longmeadow, a program offering better schooling to underprivileged high school students with exceptional ability from urban areas throughout the country. The four programs are ongoing in the schools of the town.

There have been great changes in education in Longmeadow over the past two centuries. Schools which were originally created to teach the scriptures now "Must show no preference for one religion and must not hold religious celebrations in the classroom." In the beginning children were taught in the home, and today more than one half of the taxes collected in the town are spent on education. The pride felt by the people of Longmeadow in their educational system is unchanged and unchanging as the town looks ahead to another century.

Richard Salter Storrs Library

The Richard Salter Storrs Library Association began in 1907 as a result of a bequest in the will of Sarah Williams Storrs. The land the library now stands on, the Storrs House next door, and a bequest of $5,000 were left to the existing library association on several conditions. The bequest carried the stipulations that within two years of her decease a specified group of men should incorporate and raise a fund equal to her money gift for the purpose of maintaining a free public library in Longmeadow. The library was to be named "to perpetuate the memory of a name dear to my family for three generations." The name was that of the second minister of First Church, his son and two grandsons, so the naming of a library by a granddaughter honored four different men. The money was raised, and the Richard Salter Storrs Library Association was born.

A quiet corner on the library stairs.

Longmeadow's library had been operating in different rooms made available by the town and was in need of a permanent home. In 1910 the barn of the Storrs House was remodeled to provide that home. Currently the home of the Over Sixty Club, that building stood approximately on the site of the present library. It was moved, as was the Storrs House, when the new library was erected in 1932.

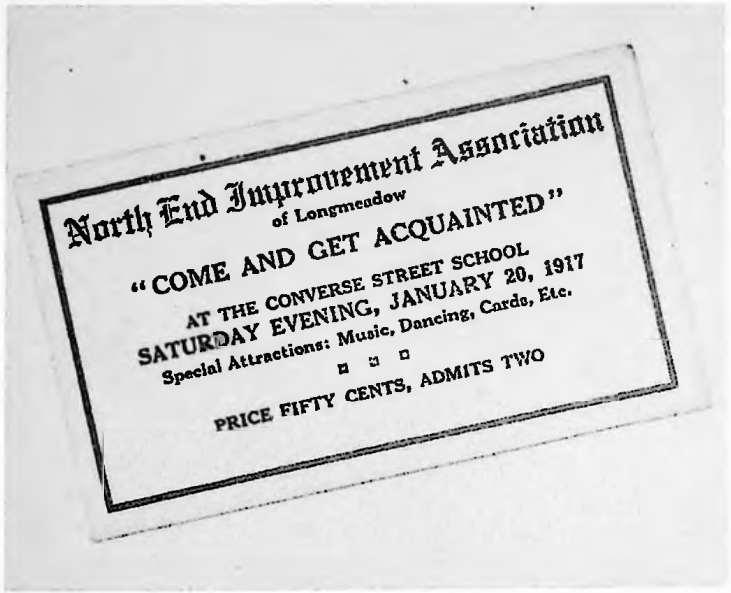
By 1930 that small gray library had became inadequate to serve the town's needs. The library directors appointed a special committee to consider constructing a new building for the library. After studying several plans, the committee decided to build the present library with bequests left for this purpose added to monies raised from public subscription.

The white brick library was built and furnished in the Georgian style. Wide oak floorboards, oriental rugs, and Colonial reproduction furniture provided a gallery atmosphere for readers. The $70,000 cost of building and furnishing the building was privately raised.

The Richard Salter Storrs Library is a continuing example of private-public cooperation. Eighty-one percent of the annual budget comes from the town, 15 percent from the endowment of the Library Association, and 4 percent from state funds. The library collection contains 55,000 volumes, and 216,000 print materials circulate annually.

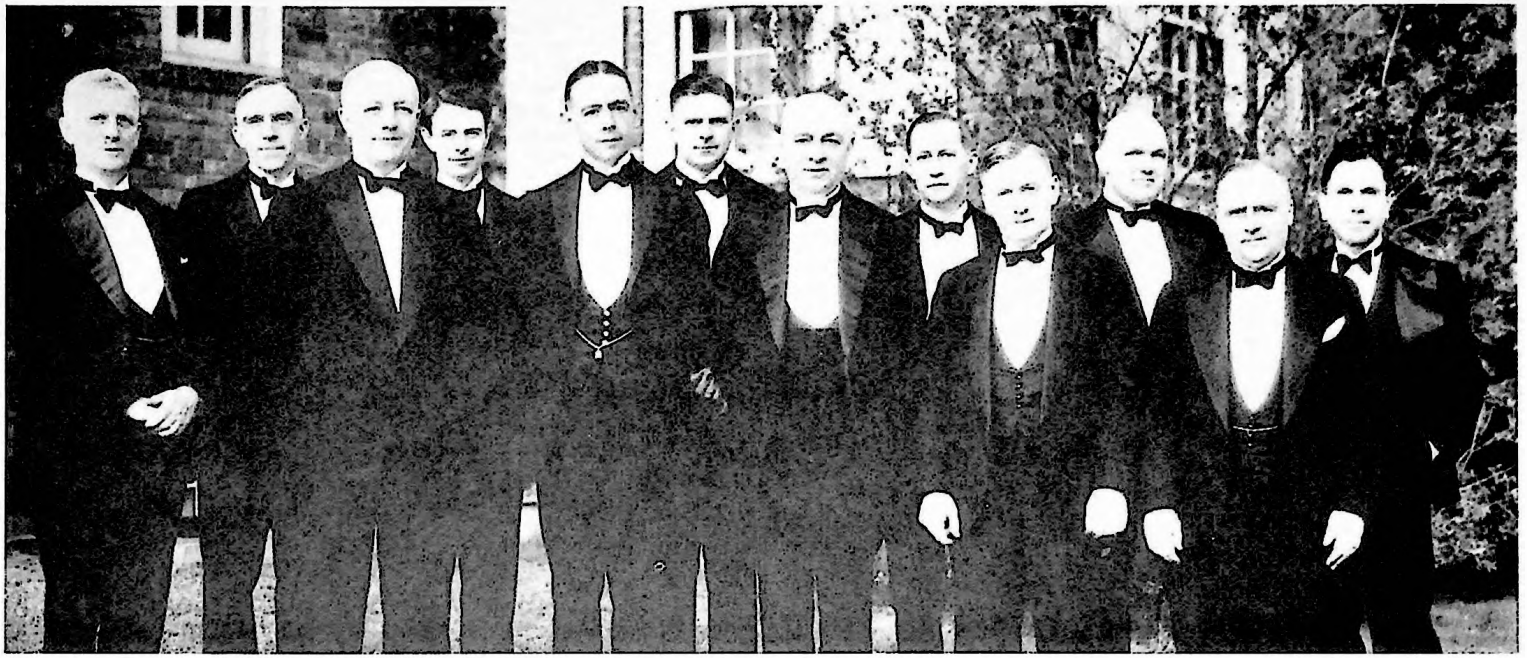
12

Social Organizations



WHEN PEOPLE live together in a community, those with common interests will eventually come together to pursue them. As early as 1796 a library society was started in Longmeadow, lending books to members only. Two temperance societies were active from 1828 to 1845, one allowing the use of distilled spirits only as medicine, the other advocating total abstinence from intoxicating beverages. The North End Improvement Association served the young suburb of 1910, awarding prizes for gardens and holding parties for newcomers. With changing times those early clubs have gone, replaced by a myriad of other organizations with general or special appeal. Our listing is not exhaustive but gives an idea of the organizational choices available to the people of Longmeadow.

Some of today's Longmeadow clubs are branches of national or international organizations. The Masonic Lodge in Longmeadow has been in operation since 1931, meeting monthly at First Church. The Order of the Eastern Star had its first meeting in 1933. Scout troops, sponsored by schools or churches, offer a wide range of activities for boys and girls of the town. The Lions Club, organized in 1947, uses money raised by an annual ski-and-skate sale and other fund-



First Officers of the Longmeadow Masonic Lodge, 1931.

raising efforts to finance work in the community. Such items as police and ambulance equipment, safety movies, contributions to youth athletics, and furnishings for the Over Sixty Center are among the club's donations to the town. Post No. 175 of the American Legion, established in 1919, has been housed in the onetime school and town office at 417 Longmeadow Street since 1931.

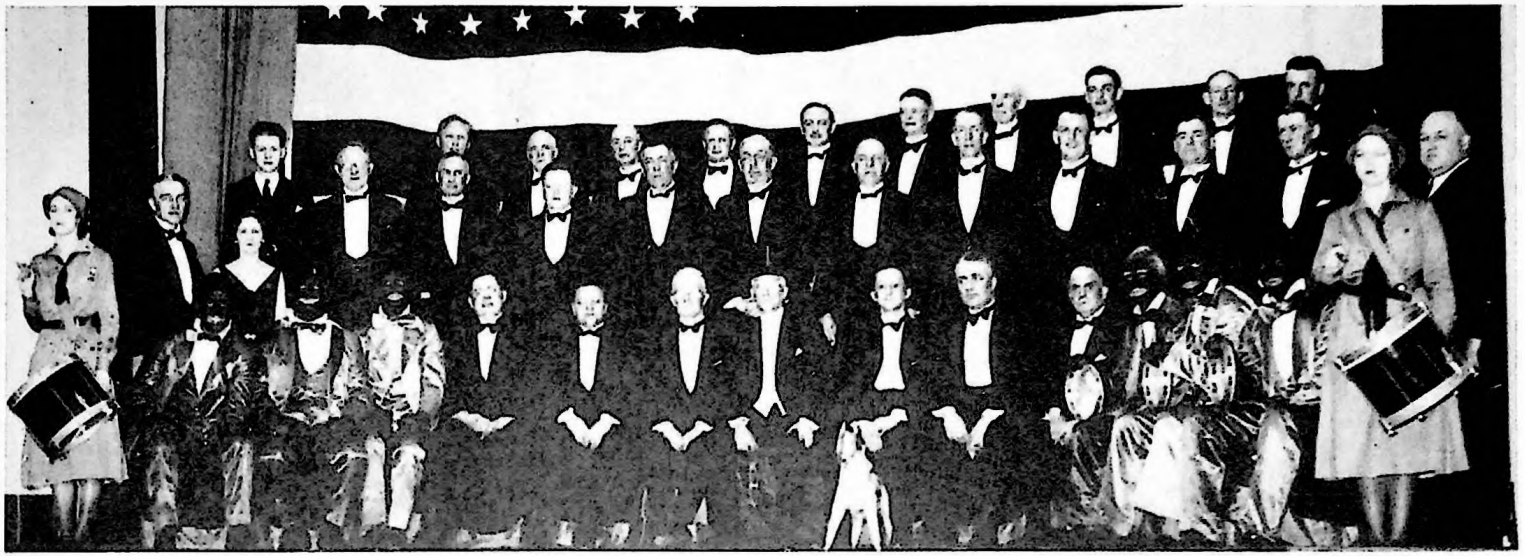
The national political parties are represented locally by the Republican and Democratic town committees. The thirty-five members of each committee are elected by voters in each presidential primary, and the committees work to foster the aims of their respective parties. The Republican Women's club was started in 1960, an affiliate of the National Federation of Republican Women. The Longmeadow component of the League of Women Voters was formed in 1976 to promote political responsibility through informed citizen participation in government.

Several private clubs offer membership to townspeople. The Longmeadow Country Club, founded in 1922, and Twin Hills Country Club, founded in 1964, offer eighteen-hole golf courses, tennis, swimming, and restaurant facilities for their members. The Pioneer Valley Yacht Club was formed in 1955 to promote boating on the Connecticut River. It offers a clubhouse, boat ramps, docks, and a swimming pool for members' use. The Field Club, founded early in the 1960s, provides tennis and swimming facilities for its membership, and Meadows Racquet Club, opened in 1977, is an indoor tennis club.

Members re-enacted the first meeting of the Longmeadow Maternal Association in the group's centennial year of 1935.

One Longmeadow organization that has endured is the Longmeadow Maternal Association. It was formed in 1835 by thirty-one women for mutual betterment, meeting together for prayer, and interchange of ideas about child rearing. The original constitution, missing for eighty-five years, was discovered and returned by Mrs. George Conway of Helena, Montana, who responded to a magazine article telling of a nationwide search for the document. Her grandmother, Experience Colton Hunt, had given her the document just before she died. The original is now displayed in the Community House. Speakers in the early years talked of "The Father's Helpfulness in the Home and with the Children" and "Our Responsibilities as Mothers." Social concerns and war relief work became the business of the association in this century. With a membership of 180, the Maternal Association is still a vital part of our community.

The Longmeadow Street Association was formed in 1876 to improve the outward appearance of the village, particularly with respect to roadways, sidewalks, and the planting and proper care of trees. It was in operation until 1938, when "as most of our members have passed away, the few remaining members decided to turn over the balance of funds to the Longmeadow Cemetery Association." The Cemetery Association cares for the cemetery behind First Church, and the Longmeadow Gardeners have undertaken since 1953 to "render horticultural assistance in beautifying Longmeadow." Garden Club members maintain several street corner gardens and the nineteenth-century-style garden of the Storrs House.



On February 22, 1933 the Longmeadow Men's Club put on a ministrel show.

Members of the Longmeadow Historical Society dressed up for an old-time dinner party in celebration of the town's 125th birthday.

The Longmeadow Woman's Club was formed in 1893 to promote improvement in moral, social, and intellectual life. The first service project was heading the Longmeadow effort to aid the war effort during the Spanish-American War. Today the club awards scholarships and works with the Northampton Veterans Hospital. Early meetings discussed "Relative Values of the Claims on Our Time" and "Are Women Careless with Money?" Today's meetings discuss antiques, ecology, literature, and decorating.

Formation of a Longmeadow Historical Society was the topic of a special business meeting held by the Longmeadow Woman's Club on December 28, 1898. The Historical Society was formally organized the next year to prepare and receive historical papers; provide lectures; and collect old papers, furniture, and articles illustrating the life of earlier days. It is also charged with developing community interest in the history of the town. In 1911 the society purchased the collection of furniture of the Storrs family, which is now

displayed in Storrs House, the home of the Historical Society. Storrs House, leased from the Storrs Library Association, has been carefully restored to its nineteenth-century condition. A storage vault and costume closet have been installed to provide safe storage facilities for a growing collection of documents and clothing. In 1961 the society received the account books of "Marchant" Colton. Recent acquisitions include the Jorey antique toy collection and a collection of letters from the Keep family. A part-time curator has worked for the society at Storrs House since 1981.

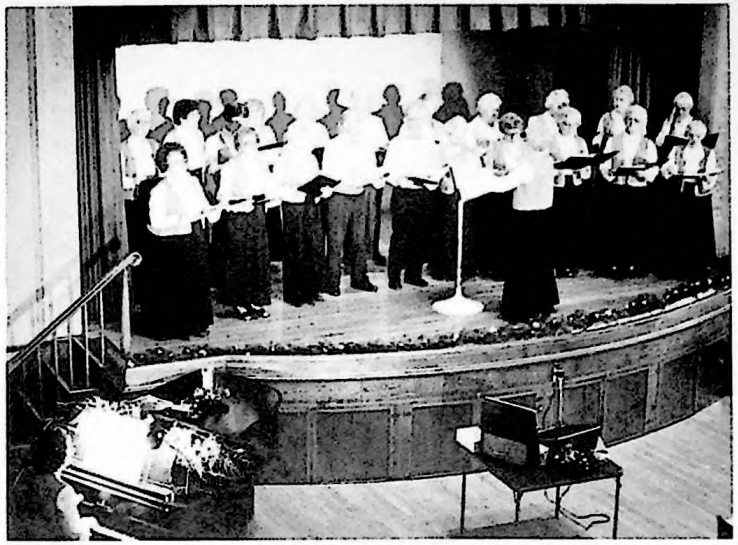
Men of the town have been able to join the Longmeadow Men's Club since 1923. The club's stated purpose is fellowship, and meetings at the Community House have speakers on nonpolitical, nonsectarian subjects. Speakers often talk of town history, local business, investments, and sports.

The Longmeadow Square Dance Club has been meeting in Longmeadow since 1957. After more than twenty-five years, the club continues to fulfill its goal of providing the benefits and pleasures of square dancing to a growing membership.

Women who are new to the town have been invited to join the Longmeadow Newcomers Club since 1963. The club introduces women to other newcomers with like interests and to the community of Longmeadow. Originally members could be active in the organization for only two years, but participation can now continue for five years.

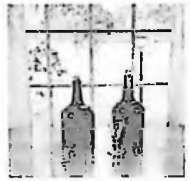
The Community Women's Club was formed in 1967 as a response to requests for membership in Newcomers by women whose residency exceeded two years. Like Newcomers, the club has general meetings and small group meetings for such special interests as gourmet cooking, bowling, and gardening.

The Over Sixty Club has grown since its first meeting in 1964 to be one of the busiest organizations in town. The club is open to all town residents over sixty years of age. It meets weekly for a program and socializing in the Community House and occupies the original Storrs Library building behind today's library as a drop-in center. The club has become interested in the problems of housing, tax relief, and transportation for the elderly. It has a close working relationship with the high school Key Club, the Council on Aging, and the Parks Department.



The chorus of the Over Sixty Club in concert at a Christmas gathering of their membership.

The people of Longmeadow once met to share books, a service now provided by the town library. They met in their meetinghouse to support missionaries in distant lands, a function carried out in the several churches of today. They even worked for the social cause of temperance for a time. The leisure time of townspeople today can be spent at a variety of clubs for sports, clubs for self-improvement, or clubs that work to improve the town.



13

Those Who Served

This 1787 flag of the First Regiment, First Brigade, 4th Division of the Massachusetts Volunteer Militia, painted on silk, was found in a Longmeadow attic

THE STORY OF LONGMEADOW cannot be completed without telling about those townspeople who have defended the village, the region, and eventually the nation from armed attack. The earliest years of life on the long meadow were a time of peace. Then fears of Indian unrest led to regular drill and military exercises on the meadow training field, preparing the men and boys to defend their homes and families. Soldiers were needed beginning with King Philip's War in the 1670s and continuing throughout the French and Indian Wars. There are records of 26 Longmeadow men fighting in these early colonial wars, many answering repeated calls for soldiers.

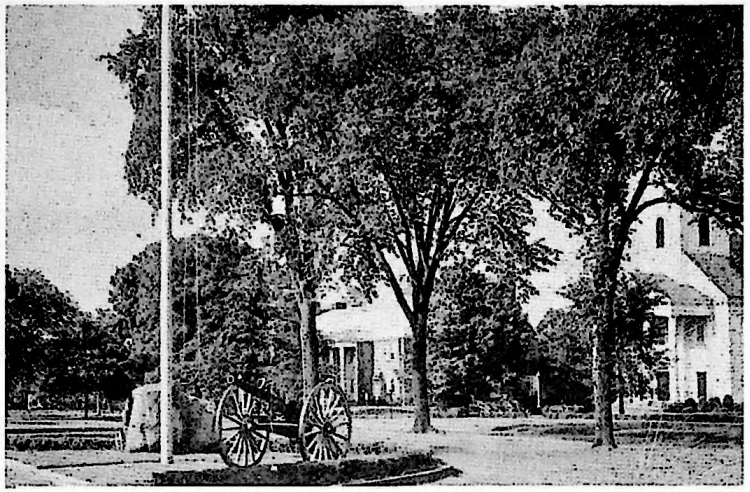
Longmeadow prepared with the rest of Massachusetts for the war of revolution against Britain that seemed to be inevitably approaching in the 1770s. A company of minutemen was formed in response to the directive of the provincial congress. The minutemen were drilled and ready when messengers told of a battle at Lexington on April 18, 1775. Twenty-three Longmeadow men marched to Lexington after that April confrontation, and Longmeadow soldiers continued to serve the American cause throughout the years of fighting. Fifty men from Longmeadow fought in the Revolutionary War, often

Veterans participating in the annual Memorial Day Service on the Green.

marching off as needed to campaigns. The Longmeadow company of minutemen was reestablished in 1974, and it participated in the town's celebration of the United States bicentennial.

When the Civil War came in 1861, Longmeadow was a well-established farming community with a population of 1,350. Young men were once again called to arms. The centennial book lists 166 participants in the war. Of those, 14 men hired substitutes at a cost of $700 to $900, and several others responded to the draft by paying a commutation of $300. The high rate of casualties in the Civil War is exemplified by the 26 Longmeadow men who died as combatants, as prisoners at Andersonville, or as victims of disease.

The records for World War I provide the first mention of Longmeadow women as participants in a war effort. They were nurses, Red Cross workers, and members of canteen services. About 125 Longmeadow men and women took part in this war, and nearly half of those crossed the Atlantic. The American Legion post



The World War I cannon and memorial boulder stood on the Green together for thirty years.

formed in 1919 was named for the Longmeadow soldier, Sgt. Albert T. Wood, killed in an attack on the Clair Chimes wood in 1918. A citation from his commanding officer stated, "Sgt. Wood led his platoon with conspicuous bravery .... His heroic disregard for his personal safety resulted in his death."

Nearly 600 Longmeadow men and women were in the Armed Forces during World War II. One who died, Cpl. Edward G. Wilkin, was awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor for singlehandedly knocking out six enemy pillboxes in an attack on the Siegfried Line. The Korean conflict claimed one Longmeadow soldier, and three were killed in the Vietnam War.

War mementoes adorned the Green in the Longmeadow of earlier days. A Civil War cannon was set in place facing the river. It was joined by a captured German cannon after World War I, and they stood together as playthings for a generation of children. The memorial boulder, established in 1922, lists casualties from early wars and veterans from World War I on a bronze plaque. The Civil War cannon was removed in the 1940s. The German cannon was removed when additions to the memorial in 1952 completed the design of the war memorial, adding a plaque for World War II casualties. A third plaque commemorates more recent wars.

A Memorial Day service is held every May on Longmeadow's Green to pay tribute to those townspeople who have given their lives in service to their country. Begun in 1872, it continues under the leadership of American Legion Veterans Post No. 175. The Memorial Day service of 1948 is especially memorable because Gen. Omar N. Bradley gave the address paying tribute to Longmeadow's Congressional Medal of Honor winner Edward G. Wilkin. Sergeant Wilkin was buried in the Longmeadow Cemetery that day.

The annual service begins with a parade to the memorial on the Green. Prayers and an address by an invited guest are followed by a rifle salute. Then the church bell tolls as the name of each fallen soldier is read from the bronze memorial tablets.

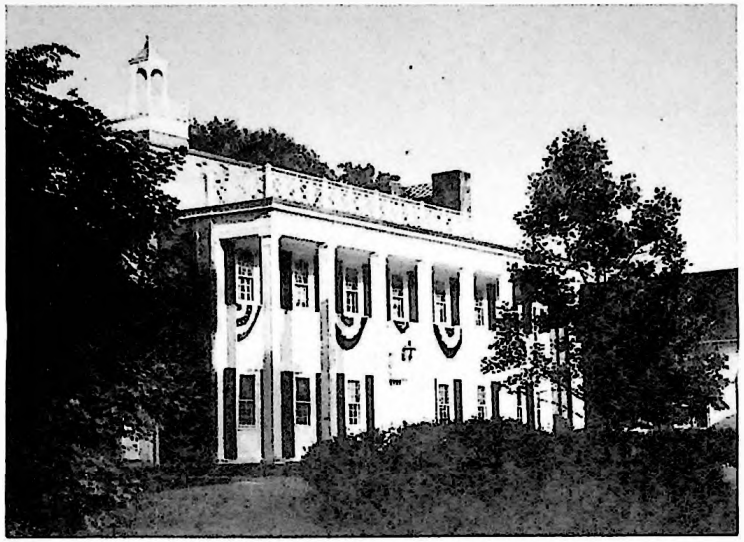
"Their Name Liveth Forevermore ... Longmeadow Remembers"

14

Longmeadow's Bicentennial Celebration

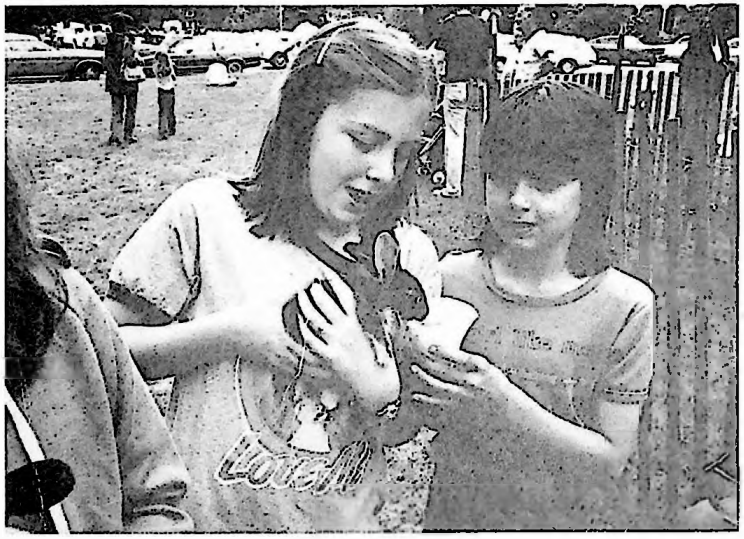
THE GREEN has been the center of bicentennial festivities in Longmeadow, as it has been the center of this New England village for more than 200 years. The celebration began with a stately evening of chamber music at the church on the Green in April and ended with the burying of time capsules on the Green. Of the intervening events, some are annual, and some are unique to the bicentennial. They have a wide-ranging appeal to both spectators and participants. This is how Longmeadow has celebrated 200 years of life as a town.

Long Meddowe Days, a recent arrival to the Green, is fast becoming a regional tradition. The old-fashioned fair has been held annually on the last weekend in May since 1980. Thousands of fairgoers have visited the Green to browse among the flea market booths and feast on the steak sandwiches, grinders, or other picnic fare that is sold by the local Lions Club or Boy Scouts. Activities for children include a petting zoo, pony rides, and a penny carnival. The Longmeadow Historical Society is the sponsoring organization for the weekend. The many visitors to the town can learn of Longmeadow's historic legacy from the displays and tours that are offered. Money earned from sales and space rentals is used to fur-



The Community House was decorated with red, white, and blue bunting for the town's bicentennial celebration.

The Brigade of the American Revolution re-enacted several battles at Long Meddowe Days in 1983.



Long Meddowe Days included a petting zoo for the children.

ther the society's goal of historic preservation in the town.

The Brigade of the American Revolution first came to the Green in 1980. It is a national association dedicated to re-creating the life and times of the common soldiers of the Revolutionary War. All clothing and equipment of Brigade members are true replicas of colonial items. Members parade and drill in the fashion of colonial soldiers, and their campsite is a careful re-creation of an eighteenth-century camp. The colonial Green is the perfect setting for Brigade pageantry, and townspeople are eager pupils for Brigade members happy to share their hobby. Five hundred Brigade soldiers with their families helped celebrate the Longmeadow bicentennial. A Brigade wedding at the church on the Green and the building excitement of the bicentennial year made the 1983 visit particularly memorable.

Kilted Revolutionary War soldiers of the Brigade camped on the Green.

These costumed ladies camped with their soldier husbands.

Dramatic readings of the Keep Family Letters have brought to today's Longmeadow glimpses of the everyday life of a Longmeadow family in the 1820s. Letters selected from the 119 in the Historical Society's collection were read by costumed townspeople in the roles of Samuel Keep, his wife Anne, their six children, and Sophia Warriner, a cousin. Vignettes from the letters are printed in Chapter 5 of *Reflections of Longmeadow 1783/1983.*

After a summer of celebration and a weekend of Homecoming, Harvest Suppers, and Bicentennial Balls, the Longmeadow bicentennial ended with the burying on the Green of two time capsules, to be opened in 2033 and 2083. The oldest daughter of the Commonwealth has had her two-hundredth birthday, and it has been appropriately marked by citizens and neighbors.

Alexander Medlicott summarized Longmeadow's history at the July 3rd homecoming celebration.

Calendar of Events

Opening Events

April 12 Chamber Music
April 29 Keep Family Letters
May 20 Policemen's Ball
May 21 May Breakfast
Evening of Colonial Songs
May 22 Memorial Day Service
Storrs Library 75th Anniversary
May 24 Evening of Family Parlor Games
May 25 Battle of the Bands
May 27 Reception for the Brigade of the American Revolution

Townspeople picnicked and listened to the Springfield Symphony Orchestra on July 3rd.

Long Meddowe Days

May 28 Our Town Parade
Opening Ceremony
Art Exhibit and Sale
Craft Exhibit and Sale
Antique and Collectibles Sale
Animal Rides, Petting Zoo
Entertainment
Tours of Storrs House, Burying Yard
Brigade Drills and Formations
Brigade Wedding
Lions Contra
Lions Club Supper
Contra Dance with Brigade
May 29 Lions Club Breakfast
Activities of May 28 Continue

Homecoming Days

July 2 Firemen's Muster
Chicken Barbecue
July 3 Coordinated Church Services
Keep Family Letters
Family Reunions, Picnics on the Green
Ceremonies
Springfield Symphony Orchestra

Bicentennial Days

October 8 Homecoming Parade
Opening Ceremonies on the Green
Publication of *Reflections of Longmeadow 1783/1983*
History of Performing Arts
Colonial Crafts Demonstrations
High School Homecoming Functions
Harvest Suppers (Sponsored by all Churches)
Bicentennial Balls
October 9 Interfaith Service on the Green
"Tanglewood on the Green"
Tours of Old Burying Yard
House Tours
Colonial Children's Games
Keep Family Letters
October 10 Bicycle Races
Burying of Time Capsules
Closing Ceremonies on the Green

Appendices

Chronology

1636 Agawam Plantation, including "the long meddowe called Masacksic" purchased from the Agawam Indians.

1641 Agawam Plantation was renamed Springfield.

1645 Common land in the "long meddowe" was divided into individually owned farm lots.

1650 Erection of houses began in the "long meddowe" at about this time.

1675 The great Indian uprising known as King Philip's War began; Springfield was attacked, and most buildings were burned.

1676 The John Keep family was massacred by Indians while walking to religious services in Springfield.

1695 A great flood inundated the "long meddowe."

1703 The Springfield town meeting granted permission for "Longmeadow" residents to build "upon the hill eastward."

1713 Longmeadow residents were granted precinct status within Springfield.

1714 Construction of the meetinghouse began in the middle of the Green.

1716 Stephen Williams was ordained as the first minister of Springfield's "Second Religious Society."

1718 The burying yard was cleared and fenced.

1741 The Great Awakening, a profound emotional and religious revival, occurred.

1750 The first houses were built in the eastern part of Longmeadow, which eventually became East Longmeadow.

1767 Raising Day was held for the second meetinghouse, which replaced the original and provided the structure of today's First Church.

1775 On April 21 Longmeadow minutemen marched to assist at Lexington and Concord.

1782 The Reverend Stephen Williams died.

1783 Longmeadow was chartered as an independent town.

1786 Richard Salter Storrs was installed as the second minister of First Church.

1790 The first federal census recorded the population of Longmeadow as 738.

1819 A major typhus epidemic resulted in many child and adult deaths, including that of the Reverend Storrs.

1829 Residents of the East Village established their own parish and meeting house.

1830 All taverns on the Green were temporarily closed during this decade because of the Temperance Crusade that swept the country.

1835 The Longmeadow Maternal Association was founded.

1845 The Longmeadow depot of the railroad from Hartford to Springfield opened.

1850 Total Longmeadow population reached 1,250, 750 in the East Village and 500 in the West Village.

1868 St. Mary's Parish was established.

1869 The first May Breakfast was held at First Church.

1874 The First Church was moved from the middle of the Green to its present location and remodeled into a gothic style.

1883 The Longmeadow Centennial observance was held on the Green.

1894 Longmeadow was split into two towns: Longmeadow with 570 people, and East Longmeadow with 1,613 people.

1895 The first public water system was established.

1896 The trolley line was extended from Springfield to Enfield along Longmeadow Street.

1899 The Longmeadow Historical Society was founded.

1907 Richard Salter Storrs Library Association was formed.

1910 Population: 1,084.

1920 The police department was formed.

1921 St. Andrew's Episcopal parish was established.

1921 The Community House was built.

1924 The fire department was formed.

1924 Christian Science Church was established.

1927 The town bought the Community House from First Church.

1930 Population: 4,437.

1930 The town office building opened on Williams Street.

1931 St. Mary's Church was completed.

1938 A hurricane destroyed many of the great elm trees on the Green.

1940 Bus service replaced the trolleys.

1950 Population: 6,508.

1955 Commercial zones were established in the town.

1955 Longmeadow High School opened.

1960 Population: 10,565.

1960 The Police and Fire Department building was completed.

1963 Temple Bnai Jacob opened.

1970 Population: 15,676.

1975 Beth Israel Synagogue was built.

1980 Population: 16,309.

1982 The Green was listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

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Appendices

Illustrations and Credits

The illustrations in *Reflections of Longmeadow* came from many sources. Material from the archives of the Longmeadow Historical Society was augmented by photographs and memorabilia from local residents and organizations, and many new illustrations were produced specifically for this volume. The editors are deeply grateful to all who so generously contributed.

In the following list, all captioned illustrations are listed chronologically as they appear in the book. The abbreviated title of each is followed, where known, by the photographer's or delineator's name, the source, and the page number on which the illustration appears. In this listing, the archives of the Longmeadow Historical Society are abbreviated LHS.

The uncaptioned spot illustrations which embellish many pages throughout the book without specific relationship to the text are not listed separately. All were developed for the calendar published as part of Longmeadow's celebration of the National Bicentennial in 1976. Peggy Godfrey was the artist and Joseph Biegel the photographer.

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The Longmeadow Bicentennial Commission and the Longmeadow Historical Society are deeply grateful to the people and businesses of Longmeadow whose support helped sponsor the many events of the bicentennial year.

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in Concord, New Hampshire.

In the Year of Our Lord One th

An Act to incorporate the Second Parish in Spring
Longmeadow — Whereas

Parish that they Labour under great burdens & inconve
the said Town & it appears to this Court to be exp
Town. — Be it Enacted by the Sena
& be the Authority of the same That the second Parish