



JARVIS MILITARY ACADEMY

(ed. note) Although much has been written about the Jarvis Academy/Vetromile property in recent issues of the Weston Forum, we felt it was important to write yet again. There is a committee formed looking into the purchase of this property at Norfield Corners for use as town offices, overflow parking, a possible art center, etc. We want our readers to be aware of the significance of this property to our history when it comes to a vote so that you may go to the polls with some background information.

Although built as a residence in 1796 the building and property were purchased by Matthew Bulkley in 1835 where he founded the Weston Boarding School. The school was operated by his son-in-law, Andrew Sanford Jarvis (the property also was known as the Jarvis Academy). The school was military in its organization and offered a classical or a business curriculum.

Approximately 50 students were accepted each year. The tuition was \$200 which included board, laundry, fuel, and lights. Excerpts from an old newspaper report of the first reunion of the students (held June 20, 1914), reveille was at 6:00 a.m.; bathroom call, 6:15; breakfast call and inspection 6:30, study hour, 7:30 to 8:45, inspection 9:00; recitations and devotions, 12:00, recitations 1:00 to 3:30; supper call and inspection 5:30; battalion drill 6:15, evening dress parade, 7:00, roll call and study hour, 7:30 to 8:45, and taps, 9:00.

Despite the rigorous schedule the boys (it was reported) still had time for merriment and mischief. One year the Governor of Connecticut came for the review and a large ball was held. It was reported to have been the greatest moment in the history of the Military Institute. However, the boys still seem to have time to harass the Weston farmers. Stories were told of how many chickens the boys stole, wood piles that were rifled, cherry trees that were "skinned" and many other nightly raids upon the good things the farms had to offer.

The boys also wrote their own newspaper the "Weston Boarding School Cadet" This included writings from

Thackery, excerpts from Hamlet and local events such as a musical soiree, a parade in Norwalk, sleigh riding and skating.

Lastly there was a song held near and dear to the cadets which went:

In the Southwest corner of the Nutmeg State,
There lies a little town
Which though no city at the present date
Is getting great renown.
For there a nursery of great reach,
Has firmly taken root,
Designed in country air to teach
Young city sprigs how to shoot.

CHORUS

Hurrah! boys, Hurrah! for the Weston Boarding School
We'll give a hearty three times three for the Weston Boarding School

In spite of hours on Saturday for those who break a rule,
Yet after all a jolly place is the Weston Boarding School!
Just fifty boys are gathered here, some short and thick, some tall,

Some that away from home feel queer, some that this place
home call

Some that by Coleys frantic rush
For fear they shall see ghosts,
And some who scorn the blacking-brush,
And some stand on school yard posts.
But when June's scorching sun beats down
They bathe at Compo Beach,
And when there's snow they hie to town
In sleighs of four horse each.
A field for ball, a pond to skate,
A gymnasium when it rains -
Oh tell us of a school to mate,
And we'll thank you for your pain.

continued on page 3

