

A square by any other name...

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By George Adams Parkhurst
Independent Columnist

Some of our "cool" teen-agers might say that there are a lot of "squares" in our town and they would be correct, literally. However, we less than cool individuals would not be thinking of "old fogies" but rather of street intersections with official names. Many of our townspeople are not aware of some of them.

In 1925, a Special Town Meeting appointed a committee of five men to review the names of all streets and squares in Chelmsford. The committee reported at the Annual Town Meeting on Feb. 8, 1926 with a long list of street names and about 25 "squares" and "corners." A few have become part of our vocabulary but many of them have been forgotten, or, in at least one case, been changed.

We are all aware of *Central Square* in the Center and *Vinal Square* in North Chelmsford, named as a memorial to Alberton W. Vinal, one of the three Chelmsford men killed in action in World War I. The replica of one of the many street signs that used to be found throughout the town designates *Parkhurst Square* at the intersection of North Road, Parkhurst Road (where the original Parkhurst settled in 1655/6) and Davis Road, also named for an old Chelmsford family.

Finnick's Corner at the junction of Carlisle Street, Brick Kiln Road and Gorham Street in East Chelmsford is identified by a sign. What had been *Liberty Square* in South Chelmsford was renamed *Sgt. Walter B. Bellville Square* at a ceremony in August 1947, in memory of a South Chelmsford man killed in World War II.

Some of the lesser known squares are *Bartlett Square*, Bartlett Street at Adams Avenue; *Dix Square* at Riverneck Road and Carlisle Street; *Emerson Square* at North Road and Dalton Road; *Fletcher Square* at the junction of North Road, Worthen

Street and Crosby Lane; *Larcom Square* at Adams Avenue and Boston Road; *Manning Square* at Billerica Road, Golden Cove Road and Turnpike Road. Also, *South Row Square* at Boston Road, Mill Road and Hazen Road; *North Row Square* at Locke Road and Davis Road; *Stearns Square* at the intersection of Dalton Road and Steadman Street; and *Winship Square* in West Chelmsford.

In addition to the squares, there are a few "corners" that bear distinctive names. *Byam's Corner* is at Littleton Road and Hunt Road; *Dupee's Corner* at Acton Road, Park Road and Barton Hill Road; *Winning's Corner*, Acton Road and Elm Street; *Perham's Corner* at Westford Street and Dalton Road; *Ward's Corner*, junction of Littleton, Garrison, Chamberlain and Tadmuck roads and *Wood's Corner* at Tyngsboro Road and Wood Street.

The name of another "square," *Golden Cove*, at the junction of Chelmsford Street, Steadman Street and Golden Cove Road, has been found in the town records as early as 1688. Golden Cove Brook crosses Chelmsford Street (or did before Interstate 495 was built). The origin of the name Golden Cove remains a mystery although there have been several suggestions as to where it originated. Perhaps the sand in the bottom of the brook contained a lot of iron pyrites or fool's gold; or yellow lilies were once numerous there; or a story that the Indians once found gold there; or — your guess is as good as anyone else's.

Before I-495, there was a fordway through the brook beside the highway where horses could take a drink and then go through the shallow water and back onto the road.

Most of these corners and squares were named for families who lived nearby.

George Parkhurst is a local historian and former Chelmsford who now lives in W.