



BROOKLINE HISTORICAL SOCIETY BROOKLINE, MASSACHUSETTS

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Dining Out in Brookline: Colonial Era to the Present by Ken Liss

Brookline today is filled with dozens of restaurants of various kinds, offering many types of food to residents and to visitors who come to Brookline to work, to shop, to catch a movie at the Coolidge Corner Theatre, or specifically for a good meal.

These dining establishments are part of a long tradition in Brookline. The town's first directory, published in 1868, included this advertisement for Aaron Whitney's "Restaurant and Eating House" in Brookline Village. It's the first known mention of a "restaurant" in town.

Whitney was preparing and serving food as early as 1865. Town records show him being paid for providing food, for example, for the board of selectmen on election day for several years in the 1860s. In 1865, at a celebration of the end of the Civil War, he provided a spread for upwards of 400 people, a feast that local historian Harriet Woods, who was there, described as "excellent in quality, and abundant in quantity."

Whitney's eating house may have been the first place in Brookline to call itself a restaurant, but it was not the first business in town to offer meals to customers. The venerable Punch Bowl Tavern, which opened in 1717, and other colonial and post-

**A. WHITNEY,
RESTAURANT AND EATING HOUSE,
WASHINGTON STREET, Junction Walnut,
BROOKLINE, MASS.**

☞ Fruit, Cigars and Tobacco, and REFRESHMENTS. ☛

independence era taverns offered food, as well as drink, for sale in early days.¹

An 1801 ad for the Punch Bowl Tavern described how

The food and nourishment will be of the best qualities, and prepared in the best manner, and the most genuine liquors of all kinds, constantly kept on hand.

Aaron Whitney died in 1868, the year the ad appeared in the directory. His former establishment continued under new ownership as the Brookline House. It continued to operate until about

1874, when it closed after being raided for liquor law violations.

The growing temperance movement and changing liquor laws had an impact on other Brookline taverns and restaurants, as well. As early as 1844, Town Meeting passed a resolution criticizing "the indiscriminate sale of Ardent Spirits as injurious to the town" after the alcohol-related death of a patron at the Punch Bowl Tavern. (The Punch Bowl closed for good not long after.)

A state law passed in April 1875 prohibited alcohol

(continued next page)

The Brookline Historical Society is dedicated to the documentation and interpretation of Brookline's diverse history, to collecting, preserving, and maintaining artifacts of Brookline's past, and to sharing the story of the town and its people with residents and visitors alike.

The Society's headquarters are located in the heart of Coolidge Corner at the Edward Devotion House, one of Brookline's oldest Colonial Period structures.

The Society also maintains the 1768 Putterham School located in Larz Anderson Park.

The Society's extensive collection of historic information, photographs, postcards, and atlases can be viewed on our website BrooklineHistoricalSociety.org

Our membership program is active and volunteers are always welcome.



This undated photo shows a wagon of Comstock, Gove & Co. making a delivery to the Brookline House. A Boston firm, they bottled soda water and eventually expanded to making liquor.

(continued from page 1)

being sold outside of places that also served food. It also put the granting of liquor licenses in the hands of local governments. A month later, town officials used that authority in granting the operator of the Colonnade Restaurant (in one of the still-standing Colonnade Buildings) a victualer's license on condition that "no spirituous or fermented liquors be kept on the premises."

Restaurants and eating houses continued to be located primarily in Brookline Village until the early 20th century when Coolidge Corner surpassed the Village as the town's main commercial district. Many proprietors of mid- to late-19th century establishments - like Aaron Whitney with his fruit, cigars, and tobacco - began providing meals as an outgrowth of other businesses.



German immigrant Jacob Morlock, for example, opened a bakery in 1875 in a brick building that stood roughly where a wing of 10 Brookline Place sits today. (See photos) Morlock, who had been the chief baker at the Parker House in Boston, later expanded his business to include a restaurant.

In 1901, Italian immigrant Max Cavicchi, whose fruit store was in the wooden building two to the right of the brick building in the older photo, advertised a

"Lunch Room in Rear of Store."

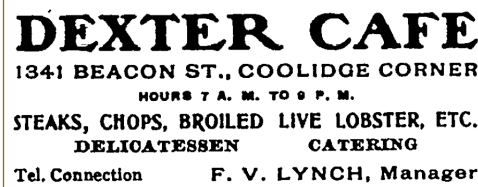
Boarding houses and residential hotels (apartment buildings offering dining rooms and other services to tenants) also began offering meals to people other than those who lived there. The Colonnade Restaurant in the Colonnade Hotel, for example, advertised "Parker House rolls, warm and fresh" and "very choice ice cream" - but no liquor -- among its offerings as early as the 1870s.



Four decades later, Martha Albinsky opened a boarding house on Harvard Street, a little to the north of Beacon Street, in 1916. She began offering meals to others beside her boarders because, wrote her daughter many years later, "it was easy enough for her to cook for five or 20."

By then, older wood-frame houses in Coolidge Corner had begun to be replaced by newer brick commercial buildings in the wake of the change of Beacon Street from a narrow country lane to a grand boulevard with streetcars. (Albinsky's boarding house would give way just a few years later.)

The earliest known restaurant in Coolidge Corner was the Dexter Café, which opened in a brick building on the south side of Beacon Street just west of Harvard Street, in 1908. (That building was replaced by the existing stone bank building, currently unoccupied, in 1919.)



Dexter's appears to have lasted less than a year, but other restaurants soon took its place in the growing neighborhood.

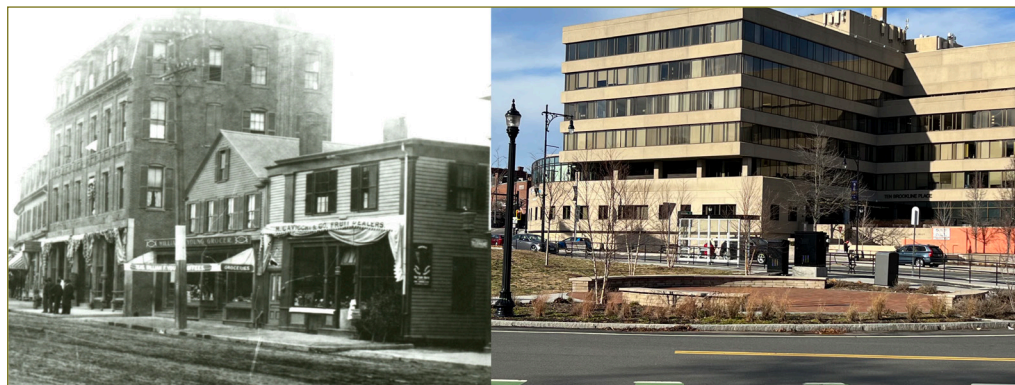
- LeClair's Lunch, run by a widow named Sadie Le Clair, opened in the new Coolidge Corner Building (in the space now occupied by the MiniLux nail salon) in January 1913.
- Later that year, Russian immigrant Abraham Landey opened Brookline's first kosher deli in the space that is now the main entrance to Booksmith. (He had two other delis in the North End and Roxbury.)
- In 1914, Greek immigrant Vasilios Rozes opened the Quality Lunch at 252 Harvard Street, just south of Beacon Street. (The space is now the Shaking Crab.) Two years later he moved around the corner to a Beacon Street building (since demolished).



Many of Brookline's early 20th century restaurants were run by immigrants or children of immigrants, introducing different flavors and tastes even if not overtly ethnic in their offerings. (A notable example in Brookline Village was a lunchroom run by Martin Mugar (born Mugarichian), an Armenian immigrant and a member of the family that founded Star Market.)

Also notable is the way many of these restaurants appealed specifically to women: "Special Attention Given to the Ladies" (Quality Lunch).;

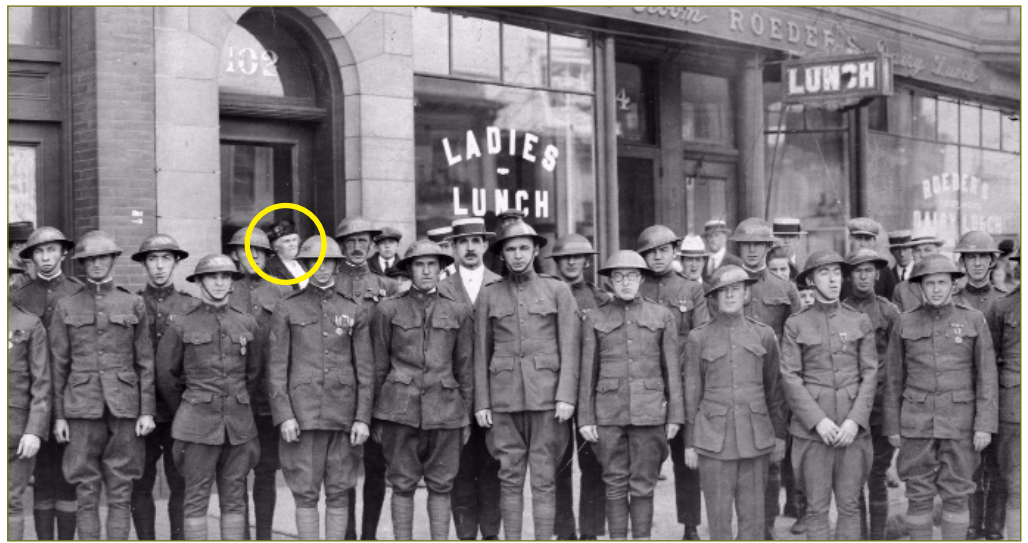
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Jacob Morlock's bakery and restaurant occupied the first floor of the large brick building in the photo on the left. Part of the 10 Brookline Place complex, shown at right, occupies the same space today.

(continued from page 2)

“For Ladies and Gentlemen” (The Sagamore Cafe); “All Foods Cooked and Served by Women” (Le Clair’s). In the middle of a panoramic 1923 photo (right) of veterans gathered on Veteran’s Day, “Ladies Lunch” can be seen in the window of Roeder’s Dairy Lunch. (A woman standing behind the veterans may just have come from the restaurant.)



Brookline’s restaurants continued to grow in numbers and variety and to spread to other parts of town throughout the first half of the 20th century, as seen in these lists from town directories.

Today, there are more than 120 restaurants in town², with major concentrations in Coolidge Corner, Brookline Village, Washington Square, and St. Mary’s/Beacon Street, and pockets elsewhere.

Among the ethnic cuisines offered - I’m sure I’m missing some - are Mexican, Korean, French, Spanish, Chinese, Italian, Thai, Greek, Japanese, Irish, Indian, Turkish, Venezuelan, Vietnamese, Lebanese, Israeli, and Uyghur. There are sandwich and sub shops, pizza parlors, delicatessens, seafood restaurants, taverns, and burger joints.

The COVID pandemic has presented challenges to all of these, and some restaurants did not survive. But restaurants, however you define them, continue to be an important part of the town’s business, culture, and community as they have for a very long time.

<p>Restaurants Janssen Paul 36 High Knowles L U 1957 Beacon LeClair Dairy Lunch 273 Harvard Monahan James 131 Washington Mugar Martin 22 Harvard Remiek Clarence A 712 Washington Roeder John R 106 Washington Rozantes & Pulis 109 Washington Schuler & Stameris 293 Cypress Trolley Travelers Inn 1262 Boylston Winthrop Cafe 208 Winthrop rd</p> <p>1913</p>	<p>*Restaurants BLUE BEACON TEA ROOM 208 Winthrop Road Tel REG 2129 See page 39 CHINA INN 303a Harvard See page 39 SOUTHERN HOUSE 1443 Beacon Tel REG 7167 See page 30</p> <p>*Restaurants—American Plan BRANDON HALL HOTEL 1501 Beacon Tel REG 6480 See page Z</p> <p>Restaurants & Lunch Rooms Allen Jennie E Mrs 3 Shaller Beaconsfield Lunch 1623 Beacon Blake Mary F Mrs 1005 Beacon Blue Beacon Tea Room 208 Winthrop rd Braganti Guido 1262 Boylston</p>	<p>RESTAURANTS All American Lunch, 107 Congress Astor Restaurant, 1034 Beacon Beaconsfield Cafeteria, 714 Washington Brookline Grill, 370 Boylston Brothers Cafe, 23 Harvard Cafe de Paris, 299-299A Harvard CHINA INN, 250-252 Harvard, see front cover Cypress Lunch, 135 Cypress Davis Restaurant, 137 Washington Fernalds Health Food Shop, 14A Pleasant Frontenac Grill Inc, 241-243 Harvard Glendon Nicholas, 622 Hammond Harvard Restaurant, 153 Washington Hooks Creamery, 1300 Beacon Howard Johnson’s, 1262 Boylston Hull-Dobbs House, 1291 Beacon Hunt’s Inc, 1370 Beacon and 288 Wash Irvings Cafe, 201-203 Harvard Millers Restaurant, 1700 Beacon MING RESTAURANT THE, 1022 Beacon, see top lines and p 58 Moore’s Grille, 6-9 Harvard sq Nancy’s Coffee Shop, 169 Amory Nonpareil Cafeteria, 878 Comlith av O’Reilly’s Restaurant, 85 Washington Priscilla Alden, 191 Harvard Reser Eliz C Mrs, 1380A Beacon Rex Grill Inc, 1648 Beacon Roxy Grille, 307A Harvard Sharafs, 280 Harvard St Clairs, 1366 Beacon Tallino Restaurant Inc, 1268 Boylston Topsy’s Chicken Coop, 294 Harvard Twelve Eighty Inc, 1280-1282 Beacon Waldorf System Inc, 1314 Beacon Walter’s New Inc, 1364 Beacon Walton’s, 1016 Commonwealth av White Tower, 97 Washington Zallens Inc, 1006 Beacon</p>
<p>Restaurants Braganti G 1262 Boylston HOME METHOD KITCHEN 1007 Beacon Tel Brookline 3491-R Houhoullis Bros 287 Harvard Mack’s Cafe 109 Wash McLaughlin James J 36 Wash Quality Lunch 1335 Beacon Roeder John R 106 Wash Stameris Arthur 293 Cypress Taglino Amiello 1266 Boylston Vangel Louis P 712 Wash Ware Robert C 1007 Beacon Wayside Luncheon 218 Wash YE OLDE WHITE HOUSE 209 Harvard Tel Brookline 2355-J See page 23</p> <p>1920</p>	<p>Restaurants & Lunch Rooms—Cont. Brothers Restaurant 21 Harvard CHINA INN 303a Harvard See page 39 Coolidge Sea Grill Inc 1360 Beacon Davis Theresa I Mrs 15 St Mary’s Dickson David 9 Webster Elio Lunch 36 Wash Georgian The Inc 290 Harvard Glendon Nicholas 622 Hammond Harvey Henry M 6 Harvard sq Hawthorne Lunch Inc The 1016 Comlith av Hilton B Allee Mrs 251 Harvard R1 Hunt’s Lunch Inc 1370a Beacon and 292 Wash Johnson Carl F 1653b Beacon Leopes Basil G 878 Comlith av Mignon Restaurant 1331a Beacon Mitchell Morris 315 Harvard Nancy’s Coffee Shop 169 Amory O’Reilly Michael F 109 Wash Papanal Peter 19 Wash Quality Lunch Inc 1335 Beacon Reser Elizabeth C Mrs 1380a Beacon Securis Telemachus J 1022 Beacon Unity Lunch 153 Wash Waldorf Lunch 1314 Beacon</p> <p>1930</p>	<p>1940</p>

1 For more on the use of the word “restaurant” for a dining establishment, see this word history from Merriam-Webster: <https://www.merriam-webster.com/words-at-play/the-history-of-restaurant>

2 The Oxford English Dictionary defines a restaurant as “An eating establishment at which meals are cooked and served to customers on the premises; a public eating house.” But what about establishments that are only or mostly take-out or, say, a bakery or coffee shop that also makes sandwiches? The definition - and the numbers - will always be loose.

Help Keep Brookline History Alive! Renew Your Membership

Do you enjoy stories like these, plus walking tours, local history presentations, and members-only programs in historic locations? Your membership dollars and donations make all of this possible. Please use the enclosed envelope and membership form - or click on “Membership” on our website - to renew today. You’ll continue to receive newsletters like this one and invitations to special members events, while supporting both old and new ways of discovering and telling the story of Brookline’s past

Thank you for your continuing support.

Names on a Blackboard, 1892 by Larry Barbaras

The Historical Society has been working with the Town of Brookline preservation staff to make a selection of the latter's historical materials available online. One item, stored away in Town Hall, was an album of 1892 school photos prepared for presentation at the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago.¹

where the Sewall School was located.

Here is some of what we found:

- All six children lived within a few blocks of the school, and all were from families headed by first- or second-generation immigrants (five from Ireland, one from England

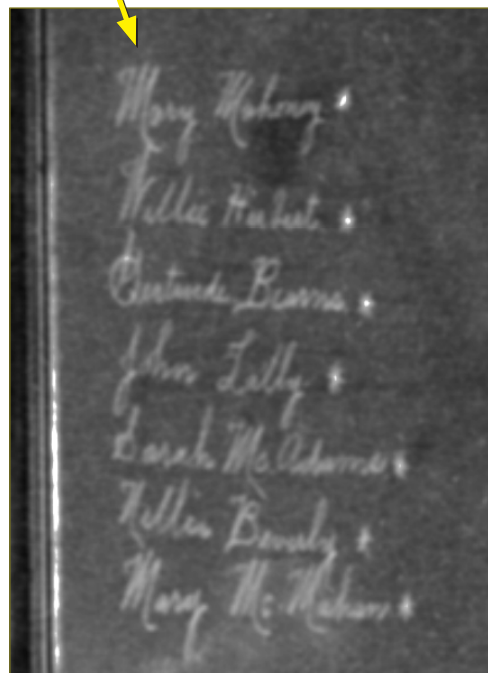
• Most of these children, like many in The Point, were part of large families.

• Several of the fathers were employed by the estates of the wealthy families who lived nearby. As was typical, the employing families lived in the hills "above" the flat lands of The Point.



The digitization process, which can recalibrate darkened exposures and magnify small detail, will often reveal tidbits of information previously unnoticed. One, in particular, caught our eye. It is a photo of a kindergarten class at the Sewall School (the building is still standing today as condos) where a list of names can be seen on the blackboard. Despite prodigious efforts, one boy remains unidentified which leaves us with six names - five girls and one boy.

We will never know the meaning of the stars next to each of their names, but we decided to find out who they were. Tracing them tells a story of the working-class, largely-immigrant neighborhood known as "The Point."



- We found no evidence that any of the six ever married.

Here are the children whose names are on the blackboard, (minus Willie Herbert², who remains unidentified):

1) **Mary T. Mahoney**, one of six children, lived at 18 Roberts Street. Her father was a laborer who had emigrated from Ireland, and the family had recently moved from "The Farm," the mostly Irish enclave in Brookline Village. A dressmaker, she never married and lived her entire life with family members, within a few blocks of Roberts Street.

(continued next page)



The houses of the children who lived near the school are marked. See the notes below to match the numbers with the children. The Sewall School is in the red circle. Most of the street names on this 1893 map have since changed: The small section of Cypress Street that veers southwest after Walnut Street (off map, top) is now Kendall Street; Sewall Street is now the continuation of Cypress Street; Sewall Place is now Franklin Street, except for the northern part, which is now Rice Street. Sewall Street Place is now Hart Street.

2) **Gertrude F. Burns** lived at 55 Sewall Place (now Franklin Street), one of three children. Her father emigrated from Ireland in 1872. He was listed as a peddler at the time and later became a laborer at the nearby town stables. Gertrude worked as a nurse for a private family.

3) **John Gerald Lally**, one of five children, lived at 23 Roberts Street. His father emigrated from Galway, Ireland in 1872 and worked for years as a coachman for the Henry Poor estate on Walnut Street, a few blocks away. John Lally, who worked as a carpenter, was still living with his parents and siblings at 23 Roberts Street when he died at the age of 32.

4) **Sarah May McAdams** lived at 5 Roberts Street, one of seven children. Her father's father

emigrated from Ireland; her father worked as a carpenter. She later worked as an armature winder at an electrical company. (Two of her siblings also worked at an electrical company.) It is our conclusion that the company was the Holtzer Cabot Electric Company on Station Street. A 1906 article listed employees "S. and K. McAdams" as being among those who contributed to a relief fund for victims of the San Francisco earthquake. Sarah lived with her parents until their deaths, and never married.

5) **Nellie Beverley** is most likely Frederica Beverley who lived at 145 Chestnut Street, one of four children. Her father emigrated from England in 1884. Their house was on the Charles Sargent estate where her father worked as the butler. Frederica remained unmarried, living

with family members in Brookline for the remainder of her life.

6) **Mary Ellen Nora McMahan** lived at 10 Cypress Court, one of six children. Her father emigrated from Dublin and was listed as "herdsman" or "cowboy" in directories - he probably tended cows on a local estate -- after having been a coachman for several years. Mary never married, lived with family members for a number of years, and appears to have been hospitalized in a state institution by the age of 50.

Four of the five homes of the children remain standing today and "The Point" retains today a sense of place with annual block parties and an official organization, the Greater Point Neighborhood Association.

(A detailed description of one part of The Point, known as Hart's Content, is available at bit.ly/harts-content.)

¹ Other photos from the album can be seen, along with other Brookline school photos, at <https://bit.ly/1892schoolphotos>. The album was just one part of the exhibit contributed by the Brookline schools for display at the Columbian Exposition. Other elements included: written work, drawing, and paintings by students from kindergarten through high school; examples of sewing and dressmaking; cabinets of minerals, insects, and vegetable products collected by students; and a bound volume of school reports and courses of study.

Brookline also gained a new building as a result of the Fair: Charles B. Appleton purchased the fair building of a Dutch cocoa company and had it moved to a new street called Netherlands Road, overlooking the Muddy River.

² A Wilwyn Bret Herbert, son of an elastics manufacturer, was the same age as the other children, but his well-to-do family didn't move to Brookline (from Newton) until 1900. They lived on Garrison Road near Washington Square. He graduated from the Devotion School in 1901 and Tufts College in 1905. There is no evidence placing him in Brookline in 1892.

Winter Scenes from Brookline's Past



Cypress Street Playground, looking from High School.

In 1905 Brookline allocated \$700 to experiment with creating a skating venue at the Cypress Street Playground, diverting water from the Village Brook the ran along the train tracks to create a skating surface for smaller children. The method proved impractical, but within a few years a new system involving spraying water onto the grass was more successful. Two areas were set aside on Cypress Field, a small fenced-in area for hockey and a larger area “for the plain skating without menace from the more strenuous games.” [Courtesy of the Digital Commonwealth (CC BY-NC-ND). From the Brookline Photograph Collection published by the Public Library of Brookline]



From 1886 to 1895, tobogganers would go whizzing down the steep chutes of the Corey Hill Toboggan Club. The chutes ran from a clubhouse on Winchester Street across the then undeveloped lower slope of Corey Hill to a spot on Harvard Street approximately where the Chabad Center of Brookline (496 Harvard Street) is today. Read much more about the club and about 19th century tobogganing at <https://brooklinehistory.blogspot.com/search?q=toboggan> [Courtesy of the Digital Commonwealth (CC BY-NC-ND). From the Brookline Photograph Collection published by the Public Library of Brookline]



The undated photo at top shows a horse-drawn snowplow in front of the Washington Square fire station; the bottom photos show the effect of a major storm on Brookline Village in the late 1890s. Brookline was proud of its snow-clearing operations. The Brookline Chronicle, in 1902, boasted that “Brookline is about the only town in Massachusetts that has its sidewalks shoveled off when it snows. Elsewhere they are satisfied with running a snow plough over them and letting the snow turn to slush and finally melt and disappear.”





This classic view of sleighs on parade on Beacon Street appeared in the Boston Post in February 1901. “All the past week the bells jingle the right merrily out on the boulevard,” reported the Post, “and the people who enjoy sleighing, and are so fortunate as to possess a horse or two, were out to enjoy the sport.” The view shows the sleighs between Carlton and St. Mary’s Streets heading east toward the Boston line.

Introducing “This Week in Brookline History”


This Week in Brookline History (TWIBH) is a new blog and email feed being introduced for 2023. Once a week, TWIBH will present brief summaries of four events that occurred in the past on that week's dates.

To receive these weekly TWIBH posts by email, go to <https://bit.ly/brooklinehistory> and submit your name and email address via the form. (You can use the same form to subscribe to the more sporadic posts from the Muddy River Musings blog, if you are not already subscribed.)

This Week in Brookline History

  THURSDAY, DECEMBER 15, 2022

January 1st -- January 7th



January 1, 1897

- January 1, 1897 - Opening of Brookline Public Bath House
- January 4, 1925 - Dedication of Temple Kehillath Israel
- January 6, 1976 - Fire at St. Paul's Church
- January 5, 2002 - Helicopter accident at Parsons Field

To read past blog posts, with or without subscribing by email, go to <https://twibh.blogspot.com> and <https://brooklinehistory.blogspot.com>

Winter Weather in Brookline

<p>JAMES ROONEY, HARVARD SQ., - BROOKLINE.</p> <p>We are now selling the best Winter Waterproof Boots, For Ladies, Gents, Misses and Children, that are manufactured Also PURE GUM RUBBER BOOTS, AND WAUKENPIAST SHOES of every description. Also Boys' & Youths' Skating Boots, just the thing for this season, and Ladies' warm Beaverclath Slippers, lined with flannel and trimmed with different colors to match mourning dresses. We also have on hand a splendid line of slippers suitable for Christmas Presents. which we can also make to order if required and a very fine assortment of men's and boys' CAVALRY BOOTS, which are just the things for the winter snow storm. Also LADIES' LONG SNOW BOOTS.</p>	 <p>WINTER seems to sneak up on a family over night. Out of the blue and balmy comes the winter storm. Let it find you ready for winter comfort. Call the plumbers who are plumb-right in their work and price.</p> <p><i>"A Bath a Day Keeps You Fit Every Way"</i></p> <p>W. H. Russell Goudey The Sanitary Engineer</p>	<p>Go to KING for EVERYTHING</p> <p>SKATES—Skates Sharpened Driving Gloves, Tire Chains, Snow Shovels, Radiator Non - Freezing Compound, Plumbing and Electrical Supplies.</p> <p>STOVE AND FURNACE PIPE AND FITTINGS</p> <p>E. S. King 207 WASHINGTON STREET NEW TELEPHONE BEAcon 1707</p>
<p>GET READY for WINTER WEATHER!</p> <p>Insulate Your Attic NOW Order Storm Windows</p> <p>Materials May Not Be Available Later On</p> <p>BARNEY & GAREY CO. 21 Walter Avenue ASP. 8821</p>		

Winter weather has always been a part of Brookline's story, and local businesses have always been eager to help (and bring in customers). These advertising examples from the local newspapers (via the Public Library of Brookline) are from 1875 (Rooney), 1922 (Goudey), 1932 (King), and 1943 (Barney & Carey)

See page 6 for photos showing some of the ways Brookline has coped with - and enjoyed winter over the years.

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