

Women in Education

Most of the teachers in the public schools were women, but the principals of the large grammar schools were men until the innovation of hiring the first woman of a large public grammar school was made in 1891.

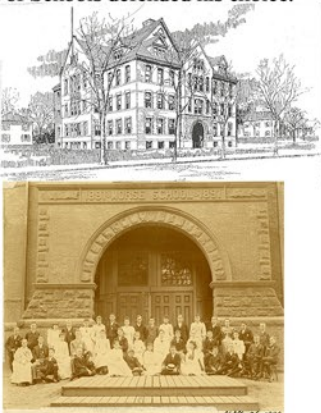
Willard Primary School

This school faced Dana Square. It was built in 1870 and demolished 1957 when the new Morse school was built.

Morse Grammar School

was built in 1891 on the corner of Brookline and Allston Streets. (It moved to Memorial Drive and Granite Street in 1957). The school included both elementary and upper grades, a total of 500 pupils. The School Committee hired a woman principal which was an unusual move for a large Grammar School. The Superintendent of Schools defended his choice:

A Woman for Principal.
In the course of his remarks Supr. Cogswell made the following reference to the appointment of a woman as principal of the Morse School: One change has taken place this year which is an innovation. I refer, of course, the appointment of a woman to the principalship of a large grammar school. This change in what has seemed to be the settled policy of the committee was a surprise and yet it comes as naturally as the harvest following the sowing. The fact is, the trend of public sentiment for the past twenty-five years has been in the direction of giving to woman any position to which she aspires, and so well has she filled the places she has occupied, that it would be no more surprising, at some future day, for an Alice Freeman Palmer to be
PRESIDENT OF HARVARD



first graduating class 1892

The Howard Industrial School For Colored Freedwomen And Children

Established in 1865 in Cambridgeport, it stood at 585-587 Sydney Street (on corner of Putnam then Walnut Street). During the first two years, over 200 former slaves came from the Virginia and Maryland areas to Cambridge and found domestic positions.



Number of persons admitted into the school from Nov. 1st, 1865, to April 1st, 1867.

Males	71
Females	6
Girls	130
Boys	87
Girls under 10 years	10
Boys	112
Total	411

From Arlington	41
- Maryland	2
- Georgetown	12
- Washington	3
- Hampton	29
- Richmond	18
- Alexandria	11
- Place not provided	24
Total	112

Seventy-two of these have gone to places in families, four and a half have been sent to hospitals, two have been adopted, and twenty-one have provided for themselves.

Webster Primary School

On Upton Street, it was closed as Webster and became Graham and Parks in 1982.



Old Webster School in 19th century

Mary A. Townsend was hired as principal of Morse School in 1891 after teaching in all the grades at Webster for seven years. She remained principal of Morse for twenty years until 1918 when she and her assistant principal and friend Mary Towle retired.

**RETIRING TEACHERS
REMEMBERED BY PUPILS
AND THEIR ASSOCIATES**
Miss Mary A. Townsend and Miss Mary E. Towle invited to Platform of School Hall Yesterday Morning and Presented with Mahogany Tea Wagon—Third Grade Pupil Makes Speech

No Cause for Surprise
There should be no special cause for surprise in the announcement in another column that the boys at the Morse School have taken up knitting. Indeed we consider it a particularly good plan and one which reflects great credit on the principal of the school, Miss Mary A. Townsend, as well as on the boys themselves.
Why should the boys knit? It seems to be generally admitted that it is a good plan for the girls to employ their spare time, so why not the boys? Altogether too much difference is made between the sexes especially in children. It may seem a hard statement to make, but if there is any form of work or play which is suitable for one sex and not proper for the other it has so far escaped our notice. The fact that boys

Anna Lowell (later Woodbury) (1833 -1909), raised in Cambridge, established the school and served as first matron with Charlotte Towne as teacher and Ellen F Dascomb as housekeeper. The photo (below left) shows Anna Lowell as nurse at Armory Hospital in Washington during the Civil War. Two of her brothers died as soldiers in that war. She later married and established a "Mission" cooking school for African -American girls in Washington D.C. in the 1880s and established cooking classes in the public schools there.



Educational Television

WGBH-TV went on the air at 5:20 p.m. on May 2, 1955. It was originally located at 84 Massachusetts Avenue (later the location of Stratton Student Center of MIT). A fire destroyed the studios of WGBH in 1961. Women involved in WGBH in the 1950s, included early art director Lilly Hollander and Mary Lela Grimes.

Mary Lela Grimes, (later Sherburne), hosted the early science program series "Discovery". She created a similar program for Michigan and Chicago public television in the 1960s.



Mary Grimes

