

## ROBERT W. PRAY RESIDENCE

74 Silver Street ~ Map #35



Known as the Pray Residence, this building was built before the Civil War for Robert W. Pray and Hannah Rockwood Pray. It is one of the oldest buildings on the Waterville tax maps.

Standing out are the white pillars on two dies that support an open porch, a good place to watch parades down Silver Street. The glassed-in observation cupola projecting from the center of the roof has been closed in. Was it decorative or functional? Perhaps they were interested in astronomy or watching ships and boats on the river.

A daughter, Emma Pray, had a millinery shop on Main Street. When she died in 1936, she bequeathed the family house to the First Universalist Church of Waterville for use as a parsonage. It was given in loving memory of her parents Robert W. and Hannah G. Pray.

Legend has it that this house was a stop on the Underground Railroad for escaping slaves because of its proximity to the Kennebec River. Mr. Pray was born in 1810 and died in 1880, so it could very well be.

There is also a cistern in the basement. The present owner was told that the minister's wife liked to play the violin while sitting nude in the cistern.