



Westford landmark

The original Abbot homestead, above, was built in 1735 near the Westford

Center post office. It was moved a century ago to its

present location at 44 Boston Rd., then known as School Street.

Abbot family's story woven into Westford's long history

By GORDON B. SEAVEY

WESTFORD — The last person now living in Westford to carry the family name of Abbot, synonymous with the history of the town for over 250 years and nine generations, was honored on her 80th birthday this past Sunday at a private party attended by her immediate family.

She is Mrs. Edward M. Abbot, the former Natalie Baron of Lowell. Since her marriage, she has lived in the Abiel J. Abbot family home on Main Street at Graniteville Road, and raised a family of three, Edward Jr., Natalie (now Mrs. Ernest L. Baker of Roanoke, Va.), and the late John B. Abbot.

The family dinner gathering was held at the Hopkinton, N. H. residence of Mrs. John B. Abbot, with the six grandchildren attending, including Edward's three: Thomas, Steven and Stephanie; Natalie's one: Sandra; and the late John's

two: Katherine and William.

Nearly a 100 cards, tributes and letters were opened by Mrs. Abbot, including those from the Westford selectmen, fire department, and Principal John Bone of the Abbot Middle School. Trustees of Westford Academy sent flowers and as a 55-year member, she was recognized by the Tadmuck Woman's Club.

Mrs. Abbot had insisted that any acknowledgement of her birthday should not be ostentatious.

THE ABBOT generations in Westford began on May 5, 1713, with the birth of John Abbot, son of Deacon Joshua Abbot of Billerica. He built his home at Westford center in 1735 near the common. He was a school teacher, acted as town clerk for many years, and was also a selectman.

A son, also named John, was a second lieutenant in Captain Bates' company at the battle at the North Bridge

in Concord in 1775. A founder of Westford Academy and the Social Library, he also served as town clerk and treasurer. In later days, Abbots were attorneys, a judge, state senator, teachers, a president of the Stony Brook Railroad and a minister. Most served as officers or trustees of Westford Academy.

As grand master of Royal Arch Chapter of Masons, the Hon. John Abbot (born 1877), assisted by General Lafayette, laid the cornerstone of Bunker Hill Monument in 1825.

And then came the mill owners, headed by Abiel J. Abbot, with mills for the conversion of wool into worsted yarn being formed in Graniteville and later expanded to Forge Village. His son, Edward (who died in 1958), later became president of Abbot Worsted and is still well-remembered by many townspeople.

Natalie Abbot, the 80-year old matriarch of the family, is in generally good health, is active in many circles, and still maintains the summer cottage at Forge Pond.