

# Prescott family homestead on the market

By Gordon B. Seavey  
Staff contributor

**A**nother one of Westford's fine old homes is seeking new owners. It is the majestic Ebenezer Prescott homestead perched on the brow of a small incline leading out of Forge Village.

When the Abbot Worsted Company was in its prime, the building served as a small hospital and medical center for mill workers, one of many largesses offered by the Abbots, owners of the worsted mill complex.

Located at No. 10 Pleasant Street, the property backs up to Forge Pond and has a private boat ramp. The house itself is imposing with its brick ends and four chimneys. Previous owners have built a substantial addition on the rear and added central air conditioning and an alarm system. Such luxuries were never dreamed of when Ebenezer Prescott built the original home possibly as late as 1825.

## Not a Colonial

Although the date of its construction has been advertised as 1760, William B. Prescott says it does not stack up as being pre-Colonial, either in design or according to his research. Nevertheless, as it stands on a nicely landscaped lot, it makes a pretty picture of an elegant older home.

Bill Prescott, now retired, notes that his great-grandfather, Nathan Pollard Prescott, was living in the homestead when Edward Symmes drew his well-documented map of Westford in 1853-55. But to trace all the comings and goings of the numerous and often prosperous Prescott family has been quite a chore for this genealogist.

Jonas Prescott was the "founder" of the Westford branch of Prescotts. Born in Lancaster in 1648, married Mary Loker of Sudbury in 1672 and settled in Groton, where he became a large landowner. He was a blacksmith by trade and built iron mills and a forge in Forge Village in 1676.

It is assumed that he used bog ore from nearby swamps for the manufacture of his products. This area was part of Groton at the time



Photo courtesy Gordon B. Seavey

The Ebenezer Prescott House, dated circa 1800, commands a view of Forge Pond from its perch on a knoll. The modernized house is in the market for a new owner.

but in 1730 some 660 acres of Groton was annexed to Westford, a year after Westford was incorporated. Water from Forge Pond was used to power his little mill.

## Numerous family

Although Bill Prescott can list off by the dozens all the Prescotts who followed Jonas, he says that he firmly believes it was Ebenezer (6), the father of Bill's great-grandfather, who built and first occupied the homestead.

This Ebenezer was born in Westford May 6, 1776 and died in 1841.

A long-time resident of Forge Village, Captain David Prescott Lawrence, then age 70, told Rev Edwin R. Hodgman as the latter was writing the History of Westford (1883), "the house . . . was

built and occupied by Eben Prescott who had three wives." And naturally, a large family.

This Ebenezer married his three wives in 1800, 1813 and 1821.

Bill Prescott, retired director of laboratories for American Cyanamide, is a serious researcher and backs his findings with many references. One wonders how he keeps track of so many Prescotts, whose names all appear in a huge volume called The Prescott Memorial.

Incidentally, the Ebenezer Prescott house is listed at the realtors for \$363,000. Its history is for the benefit of the new owners . . . and readers of the Westford Eagle.

Gordon Seavey is a Westford native, a close friend of Bill Prescott, and neither one would choose to make an historical error unwittingly.