

## The Front Stairway

*Restored by the Friends of the Job Lane House, Inc.*

This entry chamber was part of the 1713 house. You'll recognize the wide feather edged boards from the Great Hall. The **stairway** itself was remodeled when the second half of the house was added. The Newell post and the handrail were installed during Oliver Abbott's renovation.

The **small door** half-way up the stairs opens into the space created when the entire central chimney was rebuilt. It is fun to imagine that this is a hideaway from Indians or a stop on the Underground Railroad, but the Indian wars in New England were over by the time it was built, and there is no evidence that this rather obvious dark place was used as a hiding place by escaping slaves. It was probably merely a warm, dry storage place. (Mrs. Dutton used to store her pumpkins and squash here, as well as drying her soap. and the children played "dungeon" in it.) Looking through the door to the wall beyond, the back of the **beehive oven** is visible. From this vantage point, it does indeed look like a beehive!

**Marbleizing:** On a riser just above the turn of the stairs, a rectangle of plastic protects some of the original "marbleizing" on the floor and stairs, This task was undertaken by here of our members, ...list them. The rest of the design was recreated to match. Such decoration and also painted "rugs" were popular in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century.

**Wallpaper:** The upstairs hall with its door leading into the chamber above the Great Hall is part of the original house. Here again we find the beautiful feather-edged boards. A bit of early 19<sup>th</sup> century wallpaper still clings to the wall in the stairwell and is said to be from China.

**Gunstock post:** The post in the southeast corner flares out in the shape of a gunstock. It provides a large bearing surface for the chimney girt, which it must carry. This is common in 18<sup>th</sup> century architecture – the 19<sup>th</sup> century post in the southwest corner was not constructed to match.

*-Sharon McDonald, Curator*