

3 Butler Street



The Jeremiah Butler House

Form No.	5
Town	Sherborn
Address	3 Butler Street
Historic Name	Jeremiah Butler House
Uses: Original	Residence
Present	Residence
Ownership, 1981	Honora & Kenneth W. VanBlarcom
" Original	Jeremiah Butler
Constructed	1818
Source	Mary F Allison
Style/Form	Federal
Architect	
Ext. Wall Fabric	Clapboard
Outbuildings	Shed and garage
Alterations	Wheelwright shop "ell" added in the 1840's
Moved	No
Acreage	1.00 acres
Setting:	Well maintained, tree shaded lot. Highway Dept. is located next door to east.
Recorded by	Edward W. Gordon, June - July 1981.

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

This Federal style residence is currently undergoing expert restoration. A covered porch has recently been removed from the center of the 5-bay main facade to reveal handsome entrance. Its front door is flanked by multipane sidelight and pilasters with recessed rectangular panels. The house's construction date - 1818 - appears in the center of the entrance's entablature. Its 6/6 windows are simply enframed. This house is surmounted by a hip roof. To the rear of the 2 story main block is a 1 story ell. Its interior retains 19th century paneling, wainscoting, fireplaces, hardware etc. Of particular interest is the stairway ceiling's ca. 1820's Masonic emblem which is painted black and gold and displays the letters of a "secret code".

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE

The Butler house, on Butler Street, was built in 1818 by Jeremiah Butler. It has been occupied by Jeremiah Butler's descendants for over five generations.

Jeremiah was born in Hopkinton, Massachusetts, in 1789. He was a wheelwright. It was while he was working as a Journeyman that he first came to Sherborn and was so pleased with the town that he made it his home. He worked his trade but also had much to do in making wills, settling of estates and served on various town committees. He was known as "Squire Butler". He often held Court in his dining room where he could close the wooden shutters when court was being held.

He was much interested in history and natural scenery. He had a telescope and set up a post on Brush Hill to support it and he would take his guests up Brush Hill and show them all the landmarks within twenty miles. While a young man he heard of an instrument at Harvard College called a "thermometer" that measured heat. When he had a home of his own, he bought one of those new instruments and people from all around used to come to look at this curiosity.

The house has had an ell added to it. This ell is the old wheelwright shop that was moved across the grounds and just added to the back of the house. In Jeremiah's day the house that now stands at the corner of Butler and Eliot Streets was a carriage shop. Jeremiah made the wheels for the carriages right down the street.

In front of the house are stone posts connected with iron chains. In the center of the posts Jeremiah placed a lovely gate made of iron rods with iron chains connecting the rods. On the top of six of the posts is an initial which Jeremiah carved...B-U-T-L-E-R.

When Jeremiah Butler made his will he had only two daughters surviving, Miss Rowena Butler and Mrs. Vorestus Ware. The will states that the house was to be equally shared by the two women. Rowena Butler was to have the large ground floor room on the east side of the house, and the two chambers above it, and Mrs. Ware was to have the large ground floor room on the west side of the house and the two chambers above it. Mrs. Ware's daughter, Emily Blanchard Ware, by then Mrs. J. Francis Allison came to live in the house with her husband and three children, Theodore, Margaret and Robert. So it has always been in the family.

Mary F. Allison (Mrs. Robert Ware Allison)

Note: Mary F. Allison died in 1978. This house is presently owned by Kenneth W. VanBlarcom.

BIBLIOGRAPHY and REFERENCES

- Reminiscences of Mrs. Robert Ware Allison

