

# 14 Coolidge Street



*Tucker-Rice House*

<b>Form No.</b>	8
<b>Town</b>	Sherborn
<b>Address</b>	14 Coolidge Street
<b>Historic Name</b>	Tucker-Rice House
<b>Uses: Original</b>	Residence
<b>Present</b>	Residence
<b>Ownership, 1981</b>	Spiros Pantazi
<b>" Original</b>	William Tucker
<b>Constructed</b>	Rear ell before 1788, main block ca. 1820
<b>Source</b>	Visual and interview with owner
<b>Style/Form</b>	Federal with Greek Revival surface treatments
<b>Architect</b>	
<b>Ext. Wall Fabric</b>	Clapboard
<b>Outbuildings</b>	Garage
<b>Alterations</b>	
<b>Moved</b>	No
<b>Acreage</b>	1 acres
<b>Setting:</b>	Situated on a well maintained lot on the northeast side of Coolidge Street.
<b>Recorded by</b>	Edward W. Gordon, September 1981.

## **ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE**

A portion of this house, most probably the rear ell, is said to date to before 1788. Its main block, with its highly symmetrical 5 bay facade probably dates to ca. 1800. It was apparently updated in the 1840's or 1850's with Greek Revival corner and fascia boards. Its windows display 6/6 sash.

To the rear of the main block is a two story ell and a one story ell. Abutting the second ell is a large barn.

## **HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE**

The earliest reference to this house's land appears in a deed of 1772 - in that year a Mr. Shepherd sold 55 acres on the east side of Peter's Hill to a Mr. Vose. Coolidge St. is referred to in 18th century deeds as "the low road to Framingham" In 1774 this property passed to a Mr. Wheelock. William Tucker bought it in 1782. The Tucker family had moved from Milton to Sherborn in 1780. In that year Tucker built a home/store/tavern at what is no, 20 Prospect St. (off Coolidge St. to the northwest). Active in local politics, - he was a town Clerk and representative in 1782 and served as a selectman in 1787 and 1790. His son, William, apparently built the first dwelling on this property - probably in 1786, the year he married Julia Twitchell. The present house's ell may incorporate part of Tucker's home

A deed of 5 April 1820 shows that Elisha Rockwood, executor of the will of William Tucker conveyed "1 acre and a house" to Betsy Rice. Rowena Butler and other local historians refer to her as "Widow Rice". The present house's main block was undoubtedly built for her in the early 1920's - it bears certain stylistic similarities to the Joseph Dowse Jr. House at 106 North Main St. (built 1819). She took in boarders - primarily "homeless girls". She took in Joseph Dowse III and his wife Elizabeth while their house, 3 Coolidge St. (1846) was being built.

In 1849 the Widow Rice's daughter Betsey Littlefield conveyed this property to a Jonas W. Chapman. According to Anne C. Shaughnessy an A. Barrows and family lived here during the 1850's. P. T. Barnum offered them a large sum of money to travel with him billed as "The Homeliest Couple in America" The Barrows declined.

The Barrow's son, Ed, is remembered as a "notorious horse thief".

Rufus Holbrook bought this property in 1865. His son Herbert ran one of the first automobile repair garages in Sherborn and, as fire chief, supervised the building of the Town's first fire engine. The last Holbrook died here in the 1950's.

## **BIBLIOGRAPHY and REFERENCES**

- Margaret Dowse Buntings research
- Maps of 1857, 1875 and 1889
- Susan Ware's research
- Interview with Mrs. Pantazi
- Deeds:
  - Dec. 23, 1782, Bk. 81, p.450
  - Apr. 5, 1820, Bk. 644, p.191
  - Dec. 26, 1849, Bk. 57, p. 94
  - Apr. 11, 1865, Bk. 946, P.255