

25 Farm Road



Rev. Edmund Dowse House

Form No.	23
Town	Sherborn
Address	25 Farm Road
Historic Name	Rev. Edmund Dowse House
Uses: Original	Residence
Present	Residence
Ownership, 1981	Stanley McDonald
" Original	Rev. Edmund Dowse
Constructed	1838
Source	Dowse Genealogy
Style/Form	Elements of Greek Revival & Italianate
Architect	
Ext. Wall Fabric	Clapboard
Outbuildings	Barn
Alterations	Porch & 2 story bay added in late 19th century
Moved	No
Acreage	.50 acres
Setting:	East of R.R. tracks, lot shaded by mature trees, one of the more substantial older homes on part of Farm Rd. lined primarily with small Capes.
Recorded by	Edward W. Gordon, July 1981.

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

This frame house is 2 1/2 stories tall. Its plan is rectangular. Its main entrance is located in the center of its 5 bay east facade. Access to the front door is gained via an open projecting front porch which exhibits Italianate brackets and stylized columns. This porch was added c.1870. This house's south gable faces Farm Road. Originally 4 bays wide, a polygonal bay window was added at some point in the late 19th century. (see illustrations). Its windows are simply enframed. A single window appears in the center of its pedimented attic. While most of the fireplaces in this house are extremely simple, the front parlor's fireplace is more ornate. It features pilasters, elaborate moldings, panels, and hand carved wood inlaid with a portrait of St. Jerome.

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE

This house has significant historical associations with Rev. Edmund Dowse and his son William Bradford Homer Dowse. It was built in 1838, the year Edmund Dowse became the pastor of the newly formed Evangelical Society, later Pilgrim Church. A graduate of Amherst College he first preached in Ashland, Ma. He married Elizabeth Bowditch Dowse. He was the Pilgrim Church's pastor for 67 years. Active in state and local politics, he was a member of the Massachusetts Senate, chairman of the Sherborn School Committee for 67 years and Chairman of the State Senate for 25. In addition he was a Chaplain in the Civil War. One of the most famous preachers in the Boston area, he was renowned for his wedding ceremonies. Couples came from out of state to be married by Rev. Dowse. Services of celebration were held to honor his 25 years, 40, 50 and finally 60 years as pastor of Pilgrim Church. Rev. Edmund Dowse's only son, William Bradford Homer Dowse, was born in this house in 1852. He was a successful lawyer and businessman. A graduate of West Newton Classical High School and Harvard, he opened patent law offices in Boston and New York. His manufacturing interests included Reed & Barton and United Carr Fastener and others where he served as director both here and abroad. He was a philanthropist in the tradition of his great uncle Thomas who provided the money for the Old Town Hall(1858). William funded the construction of The Dowse Memorial Library (built 1914, it presently houses the Town Offices.) It was dedicated to the memory of his parents. He also gave the Memory statue (1924) which is located in front of the Central Cemetery. His sister Deborah Perry Dowse Coolidge lived in this house for many years. She was a Sherborn school teacher and local historian. In 1914 she moved to 2 North Main St.

BIBLIOGRAPHY and REFERENCES

- Maps of 1857, 1875 and 1889
- Margaret Dowse Buntins file
- Dowse Genealogy
- Anne C. Shaughnessy - The History of Sherborn, 1974