

# 2 North Main Street



*Deborah Perry Dowse or Coolidge House*

<b>Form No.</b>	80
<b>Town</b>	Sherborn
<b>Address</b>	2 North Main Street
<b>Historic Name</b>	Deborah Perry Dowse or Coolidge House
<b>Uses: Original</b>	Residence
<b>Present</b>	Residence
<b>Ownership, 1981</b>	Frederick and Christina Wilhelm
<b>" Original</b>	William Bradford Homer Dowse
<b>Constructed</b>	1914
<b>Source</b>	Margaret Dowse Buntin
<b>Style/Form</b>	Edwardian
<b>Architect</b>	Probably Pray, Hubbard, White of Boston
<b>Ext. Wall Fabric</b>	Masonry, stucco covered, green slate roof
<b>Outbuildings</b>	None
<b>Alterations</b>	
<b>Moved</b>	No
<b>Acreage</b>	1.06 acres
<b>Setting:</b>	Situated behind Dowse Memorial Building, to the south is the Old Central Burying Ground. Driveway extends from Town Office parking lot. Well maintained lot.
<b>Recorded by</b>	Edward W. Gordon, August 1981

## **ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE**

Within Sherborn's building stock this house represents the only foray into Edwardian country house architecture. It is reminiscent of the work of English architect Sir Edward Luytens (1869-1944). William Bradford Homer Dowse, its first owner, probably had a first hand knowledge of English country house architecture as he frequently traveled to Europe for business purposes. It is one of the very few pre 1920 masonry residences in Sherborn. Of a rectangular plan, it rises 2 1/2 stories to an unusual half hip roof. Its walls are covered with stucco. Its main (south) facade is highly symmetrical and exhibits projecting elements. The principal access to its interior is via a projecting open porch - fluted Tuscan columns support a porch roof composed of an entablature and segmental hood. The curve of the porch roof is echoed by the round arches which crown flanking projecting bays. On either side of the main entrance are multi-pane "French" doors. On the second floor a small casement window is flanked by double windows.

This building is surmounted by a slate covered half-hip roof whose eastern and western segments flare out and sweep down to the rooms of the first level. The eaves of its main facade display closely spaced brackets. A trio of projecting dormers in the roof's center and a pair of chimneys with projecting chimney pots greatly contribute to its overall picturesque appearance.

## **HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE**

This house was built in 1914 by William Bradford Homer Dowse as a home for his widowed sister, Deborah Perry Dowse Coolidge. It is located behind the Dowse Memorial Building on land owned by Joseph Sanger in the early 1800's. Sanger's barn stood on this house's site and his residence on land occupied by the Dowse Memorial Building. In addition Sanger owned a General Store to the south of his house and a tavern across the street at 3-5 North Main St. Sanger's property passed to the Hawes family in the mid 19th century and to Charles A. Clark in 1888. Dowse bought this land from the Clark family. Pray, Hubbard and White (1906-1918), the Boston architectural firm which designed the Dowse Memorial Building, was probably also responsible for this residence.

William Bradford Homer Dowse was the only son of Rev. Edmund and Elizabeth Bowditch Dowse. He was born in 1852 in his father's house at 25 Farm Road. His father was pastor of the Pilgrim Church from 1837-1905. William B. H. Dowse was Harvard educated, a successful patent lawyer and businessman and a philanthropist in the tradition of his Sherborn ancestor Thomas Dowse (1782-1857). He gave the town a library in 1914 (now the Town Offices) and a war memorial in 1924 - Cyrus Dallin's "Memory Statue". Deborah Perry Dowse Coolidge was a schoolteacher in the Sherborn public school system. She authored "A Short History of Sherborn" in 1918. She lived here with her invalid daughter until 1946. From the late 1940's until 1980 this house was owned by the Pilgrim Church.

## **BIBLIOGRAPHY and REFERENCES**

- Interview with Margaret Dowse Buntin
- Dowse Genealogy
- Maps of 1857, 1875 and 1888