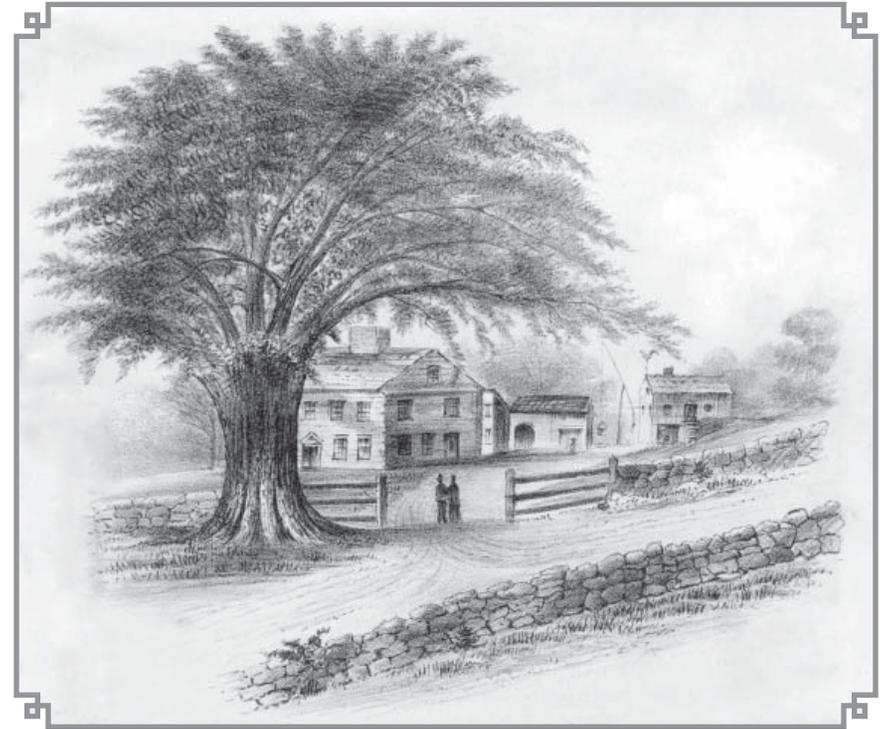


*Who Was
Peter Rice ???*



The Peter Rice Homestead

Home of the
Marlborough Historical Society, Inc.

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CAPTAIN PETER RICE

Edmund Rice and family came to this new land from England about the year 1638. Edmund was a prominent figure in the settlement of both Sudbury and Marlborough. His numerous descendants included a grandson named Peter Rice.

Peter was one of thirteen children born to Thomas and Mary Rice. At the time of his birth on October 24, 1658, the family was living in Sudbury. Thomas had received a grant of land in Sudbury during 1655, and shortly thereafter, a grant of land in Marlborough. Upon filling a contractual obligation with Sudbury in 1664/65, the family moved to Marlborough.

Indian uprisings threatened the settlement and the Thomas Rice home became one of the eight garrisons established in October, 1675. A few months later, on March 26, 1676, Marlborough was ravaged by the Indians, causing most of the inhabitants to seek sanctuary in towns elsewhere. It is not known if Thomas took his family to Watertown, as did many others, or if the family returned to Sudbury.

Thomas died at Sudbury in the year 1681. He bequeathed one half of his house lot at Marlborough to his son Thomas. To his son Peter, he left the other half of the house lot (seventeen acres) and a parcel of meadow ground called Three Corner Meadow (no house or buildings mentioned). It is interesting to note that Charles Hudson, in his *History of Marlborough, Mass.*, does not list the brothers, Peter and Thomas, as being among the principal inhabitants of the town in 1686, though both men were over the age of twenty-five.

The marriage of Peter Rice to Rebecca Howe, daughter of Abraham and Hannah (Ward) Howe took place in 1688. According to tradition he brought her to this present day homestead site. There is no description of that first dwelling. One cannot state with certainty that it was like most others of that time - a low house of one or two rooms with an overhead loft and a fireplace for heat/cooking.

Peter and Rebecca were the parents of eleven children:

Elisha - 1690	Zipporah and Zephania - 1691	
Cyprian - 1693	Pelatiah - 1697	Elnathan - 1698
Peter - 1700	Abigail - 1702	Deborah - 1704
Rebecca - 1706	Abraham - 1709	

Elnathan died at a young age and no information can be found about the twins. The other children all married, settling within the central Mass. area.

Peter had cattle, horses, sheep, and swine. Crops included: corn, rye, barley, wheat, flax, and oats. Apples were grown for cider. Not mentioned in family papers are poultry or the kitchen garden.

Peter was active in civil affairs. At the time of Queen Ann's War, 1711, he was one of a committee who designated Garrison Houses and he was captain of the train band. Also, he was Representative to the General Court of Massachusetts in 1709-11, 14, 20, 21, 28-30.

In the sixty years ensuing from 1686, Peter became the head of a family. He was active in civic affairs. His land holdings extended well into Westborough/Northborough. He provided a substantial monetary bequest for each surviving child and for his wife, Rebecca. One would now have to consider Peter among the prominent inhabitants of Marlborough.

Rebecca died May 10, 1749 and Peter died November 28, 1753, at the advanced years of eighty-one and ninety-five, respectively. Their final resting place is in the Old Common Cemetery behind the Walker Building.

*Researched and compiled by
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