

It is believed that the older section of the home at 1470 Rahway Road is where Jonathan lived, which in his 1820 will was left to his son Lewis, along with his property across the road. We surmise that at this time Lewis must have built the home, now 1451 Rahway Road. Here Lewis' wife, Phebe, found time to read and copy poetry into a diary, which is still in the family, while rearing her children. At the demise of Lewis in 1853, his sixth child, Edward, received the house and barn on the N.E. side of the road and his first and fifth child, William H. and Jonathan, b. 1822, received the lands on the S.W. side. Here he opened his blacksmith shop where recent meanderings have unturned some of the iron debris left from his work. It is believed that about 1860 Edward moved his house back from the road, because, "the whips from the coaches cracked on the door." In February of 1895 tragedy struck the household in the form of the dual death of Edward's son, Daniel H., and his wife Lucy Lambert who died within 10 hours of each other of pneumonia, leaving their eight children orphaned.

The children's aunt, Harriet, sister of Edward, took care of the nine children until their maturity. Aunt "Hat," as she was commonly called, continued to live on the old homestead after it was sold in 1946 to her nephew, Elmer and his wife Mary Somlock, who had been a teacher in the one-room school house at Oak Tree. Elmer, one of ten children of Edward's son Winfield Scott who lived in the house across the road, is presently Municipal Court Clerk for the Township, after turning his plumbing business over to his sons. Continuing the family tradition of protecting the home front, Elmer became a Sergeant during World War I. He was in a battalion in France serving four months at the front until Armistice was signed on November 11, 1918. His son James C. Terry served two years in the Air Force. Mary is equally busy, has an extensive collection of early American glass, keeps up the family historical curios and takes care of seasonal plantings to best display the famous well.

Continue down Cooper Road, or Street, as Daniel Cooper designated it in his survey of 1737. At that time it wasn't actually a street, but a two rod lane to Jonathan Woodruff's and later to Moses Tucker's, who lived on the left just across the creek after the bend, and gave the road its first local name of Tucker's Lane. In 1790 it was widened to six rods and extended through from Terrill to Martine, where the British soldiers had flanked through the fields.

Past Terrill, follow Cooper Street to Martine Avenue, then turn LEFT.

On the corner of West Broad and Martine, notice the early American home of William Scudder and his bride Mary Hetfield. William was a direct descendent of illustrious Revolutionary Captain John Scudder. The Essex farms to the left were originally part of Roger Lambert's 1665 grant, and later was Zophar Hetfield's homestead.

Follow Martine Avenue through the Borough of Fanwood, where Martine becomes Park Avenue. Continue through the heart of Scotch Plains to Park and Front Street. Turn LEFT and park the car at the Stage House Village and Inn. If you are not pushed for time, walk across the street and down four houses to see the cedar-shingled house.

JOHN & SUSIE PARSE HOUSE, 1828 Front St., Not Open for Tour

Only two rooms downstairs and two upstairs are part of the original house believed to be one of our very earliest 1680 homes.

In most areas clapboard houses pre-dated the cedar shingled one, but here we know from the letters appearing in George Scott's "Model," that "here all the houses are covered with Cedar-wood, it is reckoned a wood of no value except for its lastiness." They did last, this one for nearly 280 years. The earliest date we can find on the house is 1849 when Zachariah S. Allen sold it to Melvin Parse, our Township's sixth postmaster. In 1860 he was dispensing his mail in one corner of Boone's Tailorshop. In 1891 the property was in the hands of Parse and Smith and given to John and Susie Parse. John was the sexton of the Baptist Church. When Susie died in 1924 the home passed on to Anna Grace Buckley and then to her daughter Mrs. Hood. It is presently resided in by Mrs. August D. Ahrens, and her companion.

