

The Homestead reflects the changing life styles of eight generations of Marlborough people. It is not possible to say exactly when the house was built, but the original was certainly much smaller, and there is evidence of several major changes and additions. The front door with its side lights is an early 19th century revision, but the feather-edge paneling in the hallway and gunstock beaming throughout the house are typical of 18th century construction.

About the time of the Revolution, the Rices "updated" the **Parlor** with paneling, and this room now looks much as it did then.

The **Meeting Room** was probably the early keeping room, and its features span the lifetime of the house.

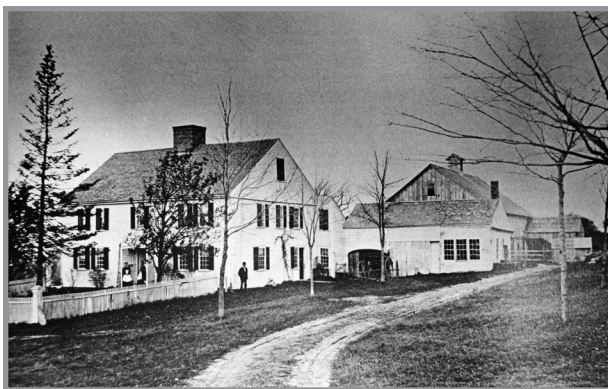
The large **Kitchen** fireplace with a beehive oven is an addition to the central chimney.

The **Kitchen Chamber** exhibits a small section of hand-split lath.

The paneled fireplace, wall, and wide pine flooring in the upstairs **West Chamber** are original to the house.

The **Children's Room** includes a school setting featuring authentic box desks and a reproduction teacher's desk, as well as a toy closet, pictures of early schools in Marlborough, and other objects related to, or of interest to, Marlborough's children.

The **Marlborough Room** contains local industrial artifacts and Williams Tavern memorabilia.



THE HOMESTEAD, CIRCA 1894

THE PURPOSE of the Society is to promote an interest in, and a study of, the history of Marlborough, its founders and peoples; to make collections of historical interest; to provide continuous, adequate care of such collections, and to insure their accessibility to the general public.

ACTIVITIES:

- Special exhibits
- Craft demonstrations
- Bake Sales
- Pot Luck Suppers
- Historical Calendars
- House Tours
- Salute to Veterans
- Christmas at the Farm/
Festival of Trees

MEETINGS at 7:30 p.m.
4th Tuesday of the month.
Public welcome. Programs
of general interest.



The Peter Rice Homestead

*The Marlborough
Historical Society*

P.O. Box 513, 377 ELM ST., MARLBOROUGH, MA 01752

WWW.HISTORICMARLBOROUGH.ORG

HOME OF THE
MARLBOROUGH HISTORICAL
SOCIETY



THE RUSSELL FAMILY



AUSTIN, HENRY, ELI, LAURAMAN
SOPHRONIA, CYNTHIA, BETSEY, LUCY, MARIA, MARTHA
BENJAMIN, HARRIETTE, LOVINA, HERBERT, OTIS, GEORGE, ELVIRA, JOHN

Tradition says Peter Rice and his bride, Rebecca How, came to this hillside in view of Mt. Wachusett in 1688. They settled here and raised a family of eleven children. In 1711, their house was designated a garrison against Indian attack.

Peter's son, Abraham, served as Ensign during the French and Indian Wars. After his marriage in 1735, he enlarged and improved the homestead and in time deeded the property to his son, also named Peter.

Next in line was Eli, who served the town as Magistrate and Selectman, and was elected State Senator in 1846.

Eli's daughter, Levina, married Otis Russell and bore him seventeen children. They were living on the farm at the time of the Civil War. Five of their sons served, and two lost their lives in the conflict.

The last of the Rice-Russell family to live in the house was Sophronia. She sold it to Ernest Fitch in 1894. Mr. Fitch, and later his son-in-law, Edward McLeod, had large truck gardens and orchards. Many a Marlborough boy earned 1-1/2 cents a box picking strawberries in the 1920s. Summer boarders from the city supplemented the farm income.

In 1939, the Joseph LaBelle family took over the property and, to provide badly needed housing during World War II, divided the house into several apartments.

In 1967 the homestead was sold to Honeywell Corp. To insure the preservation of this historic house, Honeywell deeded it to the Marlborough Historical Society. This generous gift is the spark that has helped our Society grow from an original membership of about twenty-five people.



THE KITCHEN FIREPLACE



THE WEST CHAMBER



THE CHILDREN'S ROOM