

VAN RIPER HOUSE

THE FOUR MAPLES, on River Road, now the property of Federal Telephone and Radio Corporation, has long been known as the Van Riper house.

The Van Riper name became associated with the property when John Abraham Van Riper, who had married Leah Winne in 1776, went to live in the building. A tablet on the house bears the names of the couple under the date of May 1, 1788.

They were the grandparents of Dr. Abram Harvey Van Riper, well known in town until his death in 1936. Dr. Van Riper, born in 1854, was married in October of 1878, to Clarissa Van Schaack McMeehan, who died in 1928. After passing through other hands the house became the home of Mr. and Mrs. Jean Witbeck, who in turn sold it in 1943 to the International Telephone & Telegraph Company.

When the Witbecks took over the house they made many improvements and also restored some of its features. The original kitchen with an open Dutch stove, was often used for the roasting of whole animals, according to information which Mr. Witbeck says he received from Dr. Van Riper. The Witbecks, who now live in Pennsylvania, have a desk bearing the name "Letcher Van Riper" scratched in the wood. Letcher was a Dutch name for Leah.

The Four Maples is now occupied by Admiral Ellery Stone and family.



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- [Van Riper](#)
- [Houses](#)