

# 35 Farm Road



*Joseph Bacon House*

<b>Form Nos.</b>	25 house, 209 barn, 210 garage, 208 north garage
<b>Area</b>	
<b>Town</b>	Sherborn
<b>Address</b>	35 Farm Road
<b>Assessor's Map</b>	11/57
<b>USGS Map</b>	Medfield
<b>Historic Name</b>	Joseph Bacon House
<b>Uses: Original</b>	Residence
<b>Present</b>	Residence
<b>Ownership, 1981</b>	Walter Robb III
<b>" Original</b>	Joseph Bacon
<b>Constructed</b>	House 1750, barn ca. 1800, garage 1930, north garage 1947.
<b>Source</b>	Morse - <u>History of Sherborn and Holliston</u>
<b>Style/Form</b>	Georgian
<b>Architect</b>	Possibly Joseph Bacon, carpenter
<b>Ext. Wall Fabric</b>	Clapboard
<b>Outbuildings</b>	Garage
<b>Alterations</b>	Remodeled in 1950's
<b>Moved</b>	No
<b>Acreage</b>	3.11 acres
<b>Setting:</b>	Situated on the north side of Farm Road across from a large barn, grounds are beautifully landscaped.

**Recorded** July 1981, by Edward W. Gordon  
**Updated** 1999, by Sanford Johnson

**Film Roll/Negative** Roll 4

## **ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION**

### 1981 Survey

Dating to the mid 18th century, this handsome country Georgian farmhouse displays a symmetrical 5 bay main facade and central chimney. Its front door is flanked by Doric pilasters. Above the door is a transom containing five small bull's eye panes. This dwelling culminates in a gable roof with short eaves.

### 1999 Update

The house at 35 Farm Road (**#25**) survives as it is described on the survey form completed in 1981. No major changes have been carried out since that time except for the reconstruction of the chimney. The barn now belongs to the owner of 36 Farm Road.

The barn (**#209**) at 35 Farm Road is a large, front gabled form of one and one-half stories, oriented parallel to the south side of the road, across from the house. The facade is pierced by a vehicle opening with interior sliding doors. The plain exterior, uncut stone foundation, shallow-pitched roof and historical documents indicate that it may have been built prior to the turn of the 19th century. Two 6/6 double-hung sash light the north side elevation near the west-facing facade and a single window occupies the front gable peak. Walls are clad in wood shingles and the roof in asphalt shingles. A flared course of shingles gives the appearance of a closed gable and a blind row of transom lights is above the entry. The center of the ridgeline is marked by a gabled ventilator. The barn is remarkably similar in form to that at 46 Forest Street\*\*, built ca. 1845.

Two other outbuildings serve as garages. South of the main barn, also on the south side of the Farm Road, is the five-bay garage, built around 1930 (**#210**). The one-story, side-gabled form has an uncut stone foundation and is clad in wood shingles. Access is through five roll-up doors of varying width in the west-facing facade. Side walls are lit with three 6/6 double-hung sash with plain trim. A two-bay garage built in 1947 (**#208**) is adjacent to the house on the north side of the road. A pass- door occupies the left side of the facade. The one-story, side-gabled building is built of cinderblock and clad in stucco. The roof is articulated with a flared eave.

## **HISTORICAL NARRATIVE**

### 1981 Survey

Joseph Bacon may have built this house. He was the carpenter who enlarged the old First Parish Church by cutting it in two and adding 20 ft. in the middle. Bacon had acquired part of the Morse family holdings. He sold it to Joseph Holbrook in 1769. Henry Pratt and his bride Aseneth Holbrook acquired this dwelling in 1802. Their son, Jacob, born here in 1806, invented and manufactured corn planters, shellers, and other machines. He was also a landscape architect of note, laying out the formal gardens of 8 Washington Street and Pine Hill Cemetery (1852).

By the 1870's A. B. Potter owned this house and 100 acres of land.

According to Charles B. Dowse, Joseph Bacon was Captain of the 9th Sherborn Company and marched on the 19th of April, 1775. He is said to have been a doctor as well as a carpenter. Farm Road is one of Sherborn's oldest streets - it once linked the Morse family farm with Sherborn Center. Morses settled in

Sherborn in the 1650's. Over time Farm Road has been called The Road to the Farm, The Village Road to Dover and Trinity Street - its eastern terminus is near the Pilgrim Church. It officially became Farm Road in the early 1900's. Seven houses along this venerable thoroughfare possess segments which date before 1800.

### 1999 Update

The house at 35 Farm Road was constructed around 1765, which may be the time of construction for the barn (#209) as well. The builder of the house, carpenter Joseph Bacon, may also have built the barn. Mr. Bacon sold the house in 1769 to Joseph Holbrook, a blacksmith and farmer who maintained what is described in the 1798 inventory of land and buildings as a barn 35'x26' (slightly smaller than the current barn), a smaller corn barn and a shed, neither of which survive. Joseph Holbrook had a blacksmith shop located somewhere on the property. The farmer Jacob Pratt, his wife, Phebe and their two children were the occupants in 1856-65 according to the Walling map and state censuses. The Pratts took in three Irish boarders to work the farm in 1855 and two boarders in 1865. Jacob Pratt's three older half-brothers were well-known gunsmiths. Henry Pratt continued to work in the trade in Sherborn.

West Newton resident Andrew B. Potter farmed this land, probably on a part time leisure basis, from 1874 to 1905, the approximate time of his death. He was a West Newton resident who sold real estate from his office on Waltham Street. Mr. Potter kept a horse, 7 cows and six swine on his 100 acres in Sherborn. A cottage, hen house and two storehouses also appear in the 1885 valuations. The entire area of the farm at 35 Farm Road is depicted as hay fields and pasture on 1939 WPA maps, probably growing hay to feed the dairy cows. Two garages (#s 208, 210) were constructed on the property. The first is south of the road and serves as a multiple-bay garage, built around 1930. The second was built in 1947 behind (north of) the house.

## **BIBLIOGRAPHY and REFERENCES**

### 1981 Survey

- Margaret Dowse Buntin's research
- Anne C. Shaughnessy - A Guide to Sherborn, 1974
- 1798 assessor's list
- Maps of 1857, 1875 and 1889
- "Sherborn Past and Present" 1674-1924

### 1999 Update

- 1981 MHC B form from survey by Edward Gordon
- 1856 Walling Map; 1874 Beers Map; 1889 Walker Map; 1939 W.P.A. Map
- Anne C. Shaughnessy - The History of Sherborn and A Guide to Sherborn, 1974
- Conversation with Betsy Johnson, 1/99
- History of Middlesex County, Hurd
- Sherborn Vital Records to 1850
- Tax valuations, 1865-1945
- 1855, 1865 state censuses
- 1798 Inventory of Land and Buildings