

23 Hollis Street

(no photo)

Walter. M. Cabot House

Form No.	42
Town	Sherborn
Address	23 Hollis Street
Historic Name	Walter. M. Cabot House (on site of Barak Leland House)
Uses: Original	Residence
Present	Residence
Ownership, 1981	Elaine and George F. Fiske, Jr.
" Original	Walter M. Cabot
Constructed	1924
Source	Owner
Style/Form	Georgian Revival with Federal elements
Architect	Joseph Everett Chandler
Ext. Wall Fabric	Clapboards
Outbuildings	Large frame ca. 1840 barn which was enlarged in 1910.
Alterations	West piazza moved 1969, east piazza enclosed at undetermined date, room added to south elevation in 1981.
Moved	No
Acreage	13.30 acres
Setting:	Situated on low, rolling hill, surrounded by meadows, woods, well maintained lawns. Pre 20th century rural charm is still intact.
Recorded by	Edward W. Gordon, September 1981

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

The Walter. M. Cabot House is located in South Sherborn on the southern side of Hollis Street. It is situated on a low, rolling hill above meadows, woods and well maintained lawns. To the west of the main house is a large frame barn, ca. 1840. A winding driveway links the house with Hollis St.

Constructed of wood, this country estate is composed of two 2 1/2 story segments. The central hall plan main block (eastern segment) is stylistically Georgian Revival. Abutting a portion of its western wall is a structure which possesses a distinctive gable roof. Its steeply pitched north slope sweeps from the ridge to the eaves of an open porch. To the rear of the western segment is a one room addition which has been recently constructed -its surface treatments sensitively blend with the Colonial Revival elements of the existing structure.

The principal entrance is located on the main block's south facade. Both north and south elevations are

five bays wide, exhibit multipane windows (12/12) and feature white pillared porticos. Both north and south entrances possess paneled doors which are flanked by multipane side lights and are surmounted by elegant fanlights (a Federal Revival accent). A piazza originally projected from the east wall. It is presently covered with clapboards. The western piazza was removed in 1969. (See illustration). The main block is crowned by a long, low gable roof which is effectively set off with two handsome chimneys. The southern slope is broken by three well-proportioned pedimented dormers. This house's two segments encompass both formal and informal interpretations of the Colonial Revival - the main block is more academically correct in terms of Georgian Revival form and surface treatments than the more loosely rendered Western segment. This house is one of the few early 20th century country estates which did not evolve from an 18th or early 19th century nucleus.

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE

This house was built in 1924 by the Boston architect Joseph Everett Chandler (1864-1945) for Walter M. Cabot. Between 1900 and 1930 a number of country estates were built in South Sherborn. Existing 18th and early 19th century dwellings were enlarged and rambling Colonial Revival houses were constructed for well-to-do Bostonians and families from neighboring communities.

The Walter M. Cabot House occupies the site of the Barak Leland house (1750). A 1 1/2 story saltbox with an 1817 addition, it was consumed in a fire in January, 1915.

Associated with this property is a "Hatfield-McCoy" like anecdote. For many years two Leland brothers who lived on adjacent Hollis Street properties were involved in a bitter quarrel. Walter Leland (born 1787) lived on this property while his brother, Lemuel, lived next door in the Old Red House (27 Hollis St.). Lemuel would not allow Walter to cross a small portion of land which stretches across the entrance to what is now 23 Hollis St. The argument was settled at Town Meeting. The driveway was declared a public way, and so it remained until the early 1900'S. At that time it was released to W. H. Burlen who owned the place.

In 1836 this property was purchased by Dexter Cozzens. He built the large frame barn on the property about 1840. By the 1870's the old saltbox had returned to Leland ownership - (a B. Leland lived here.)

Walter M. Cabot bought this property in the early 1920's. He was a descendant of George Cabot (1752-1823), the American merchant, cotton mill owner and politician who lived in Salem. Ma. Walter Cabot only resided here a few months of the year.

He hired the Boston architect Joseph Everett Chandler to design this house. Chandler was born in Plymouth, Ma. in 1864. He graduated from M.I.T. in 1889. For a time he was a partner in the firm of Dwight and Chandler. He acquired a reputation as an authority on Colonial architecture. He is identified with the restoration of various historical Massachusetts landmarks including the Paul Revere House, the Old Corner Bookstore and the House of the Seven Gables. Chandler also designed a number of Boston area country houses, e.g. a "half timber house" and a "cottage in the Norwegian style" at Chestnut Hill. Chandler provided Walter M. Cabot with a handsome Georgian Revival home which is more typical of early 20th century Boston area country house construction than the more exotic Henry G. Vaughn House (Dutch Colonial Revival) on Sparhawk Road or the palatial Lewis House at 173 Forest Street.

BIBLIOGRAPHY and REFERENCES

- "House Beautiful"- Oct. 1925
- Margaret Dowse Buntin's research
- Anne C. Shaughnessy - A Guide to Sherborn, 1974
- Maps of 1788, 1857, 1875 and 1889
- Telephone interviews with George F. Fiske, Jr. and Mrs. John M. Woods
- "A House of New England Tradition" by Elizabeth H. Russell