

36 Nason Hill Road



Jonas Fisk House or "Red Gate Farm"

Form No.	78
Town	Sherborn
Address	36 Nason Hill Road
Historic Name	Jonas Fisk House or "Red Gate Farm"
Uses: Original	Residence
Present	Residence
Ownership, 1981	John Peirce
" Original	Jonas Fisk
Constructed	1765, possibly 1779
Source	Anne C. Shaughnessy
Style/Form	Mid 18th century frame vernacular
Architect	
Ext. Wall Fabric	Clapboard
Outbuildings	Garage and barn
Alterations	East ell added at undetermined date, "greenhouse" and west wing added in 1970's.
Moved	No
Acreage	15.53 acres
Setting:	Situated between Nason Hill(north) and Pocassett Hill (southeast) surrounded by woodlands with extensive trails.
Recorded by	Edward W. Gordon, June - July 1981

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

This simple mid 18th century farmhouse is composed of a 2 1/2 story main block and two wings (east and west). Like most of Sherborn's 17th and 18th century dwellings the 5 bay main facade of its oldest portion faces south. This writer leans toward 1765 rather than a 1770's or 1780's construction date because the spacing and proportions of its windows, along with its massive central chimney are features which are more clearly tied with earlier, country Georgian structures. Its windows and front door are simply enframed by vertical and horizontal boards. The red barn to the right of the house's driveway is said to date to 1812. This house, despite recent additions, is an important 18th century survivor from farming days in the Stannocks or "Old Fisk" neighborhood.

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE

This house is situated in the heart of the so called Stannocks region of southwest Sherborn. The word "stannocks" came from the Nipmuck Indian word denoting their houses and it was in this fertile area that they chose to settle. Red Gate's land was part of a 1644 land grant to Lt. Joshua Fisher of Dedham. Anne Shaughnessy notes that Fisher sold to one of the first settlers, Nicholas Wood, who left in his will "All those lands, meadow and uplands which I bought of Lt. Fisher to my son Eleazer." This corresponds to land in the Stannocks bordering Hollis St. and Nason Hill Rd. By the 18th century the Stannocks was also known as a "Fisk neighborhood". Red Gate Farm's main block is said to have been built in 1765 by Jonas Fisk. In that year he married Mary Hill. His brother John, married Mary's sister, Sarah, and built the house at Stannox Farm. (11 Nason Hill Rd.) By 1792 James and Abial Nason Hill owned this house. Nason Hill Rd. was named for their son who was born in 1812 and farmed this property for many years. By the late-19th century a J. N. Hill owned this house. During the 1920's and 1930's this house was owned by Selectman Ira Ward. Richard Saltonstall remembered him as a "man of integrity, ability and most agreeable personality." He was one of the last drivers of Boston horse drawn cars before moving to Sherborn. His apple cider is widely remembered.

People by the name of Cozzens owned this place as late as 1913 and probably later. Ira Ward was married to their daughter.

BIBLIOGRAPHY and REFERENCES

- Margaret Dowse Buntin's research
- Anne C. Shaughnessy - A Guide to Sherborn and The History of Sherborn, 1974
- Maps of 1788, 1874 and 1889
- Joseph Blanchard's reminiscences