

# 9 North Main Street



*The Onion House*

<b>Form No.</b>	84
<b>Town</b>	Sherborn
<b>Address</b>	9 North Main Street
<b>Historic Name</b>	The Onion House
<b>Uses: Original</b>	Residence
<b>Present</b>	Residence
<b>Ownership, 1981</b>	Barbara L. Keough
<b>" Original</b>	Possibly Capt. Jacob Pratt
<b>Constructed</b>	ca. 1830-1840
<b>Source</b>	Rowena Butler's reminiscences of Sherborn in the 1840's
<b>Style/Form</b>	Cape
<b>Architect</b>	
<b>Ext. Wall Fabric</b>	Clapboard
<b>Outbuildings</b>	
<b>Alterations</b>	Rear addition dates to the late 19th century
<b>Moved</b>	No
<b>Acreage</b>	Less than one acre
<b>Setting:</b>	Situated on the slope of a hill in the densely settled area which includes the Dowse Memorial Building. Behind #9 are the cottages of Zions and Linden Lanes.
<b>Recorded by</b>	Edward W. Gordon, July 1981

## **ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE**

This is one of Sherborn's most attractive Cape Cod cottages. Its plan reflects the traditional cape formula - one room on either side of a central hall. Projecting from the center of the 5 bay main facade is a ca. 1870's door hood. Leafy, punched out forms which may be loosely described as oriental or Eastlavian decorate the door hood. To the rear of the house is a one story wing. This house along with cottages on Zions and Linden Lanes form a country village-like enclave.

## **HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE**

This house is said to have been built prior to 1840 possibly by Capt. Jacob Pratt. He was born April 25, 1806 at 35 Farm Road, a dwelling which he later inherited. His children grew up at 9 North Main Street, including Jacob, who lived here in 1875. Jacob Pratt was an inventor and landscape architect of note. He laid out the formal gardens at 8 Washington Street (Col. Sanger's house) and was the landscape planner for Sherborn's Mt. Auburn-like Pine Hill Cemetery. For many years this house has been known as the "Onion House." In the early 1900's an elderly widow named Mrs. Onion lived here. She is remembered as a "tiny old lady swathed in black widow's weed and [who] had many cats."

Note: Mrs. Onion was Alma S. Ware, daughter of Albert Penniman Ware and Joanna D. Leland. She was born in Sherborn in 1846. In 1895 she married Charles N. Onion of Curritville, Mass.

Charles died in 1910 at Sherborn and she lived here alone with her cats until her death in 1924.

In the late 1930's David Daniels bought this house when he sold the family homestead at 2 Snow Street where he had lived with his family since his father's death in 1920.

## **BIBLIOGRAPHY and REFERENCES**

- Margaret Dowse Buntin's research
- Anne C. Shaughnessy - A Guide to Sherborn, 1974
- Maps of 1857, 1875 and 1889
- Susan Ware's Genealogical research - 1981
- Joseph Blanchard's reminiscences