

15 North Main Street



Amos Bigelow House

Form Nos.	85 house, 278 carriage barn
Area	A,G
Town	Sherborn
Address	15 North Main Street
Assessor's Map	11/5
USGS Map	Medfield
Historic Name	Amos Bigelow House
Uses: Original	Residence
Present	Residence
Ownership, 1981	John Luczkow
" Original	Possibly Amos Bigelow
Constructed	House ca. 1840, barn ca. 1870
Source	Margaret Dowse Buntin's research
Style/Form	Greek Revival
Architect	
Ext. Wall Fabric	Aluminum Clapboard
Outbuildings	Original barn
Alterations	Colonial Revival porches added in early 20th century
Moved	No
Acreage	1.25 acres 1981, 1.5 acres 1999
Setting:	Situated close to the road near the railroad tracks and across from the town's most architecturally distinguished structure - the Clark House (Italian villa style).

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

Film Roll/Negative Roll 5

X Recommended for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. NRMRA/DIS 1/3/86

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

1981 Survey

This is a solid example of Greek Revival domestic architecture ca. 1840-1850. In terms of massing and surface treatment it is reminiscent of several Dowse's Corner dwellings (e.g. 102 North Main Street). Essentially L-shaped in plan, its main block and south wing appear to have been built at the same time. Its edges are defined by wide Doric corner boards and its gables are fully enframed. Its windows are fully enframed and are surmounted by classicized caps. Colonial Revival porches with Tuscan columns and turned balusters appear to date to ca. 1890-1920. Of particular interest is its original barn, which is of a flush boarding construction similar to that of the Clark House's barn across the street. The barn's attic exhibits round arch windows. It was probably built with a cupola.

1999 Update

The Amos Bigelow House at 15 North Main Street (#85) survives as it is described on the survey form completed in 1981 with the exception that the front porch has been removed and new sash have been added since that time.

An ornate Gothic Revival style carriage barn is attached at the southwest corner to the Amos Bigelow House and complements its neighbor across the street. (16 North Main Street** Form no. 86) The barn is a well-maintained, highly ornate outbuilding, rising one and one-half stories from its rectangular gable-front, one by four-bay plan. A cupola with 6/6 double-hung sash and pyramidal hipped roof marks the ridgeline. The facade is pierced by a large rolling door under a pair of fixed six-pane sash, a pass door beside it and a 6/6 double-hung sash in the gable peak. The window in the gable has beaded trim culminating in an arch above. Sash on the south side wall are small windows fairly high on the wall, indicating the presence of horse stalls. Ornament includes gable returns, molded cornice and walls clad in board and batten siding. The barn's northeast corner is connected to a rear addition of the Amos Bigelow House.

HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

1981 Survey

An Amos Bigelow is listed as this property's owner on the 1875 map. An Amos Bigelow b. 1798 had six children by Lucy Stow, the second of whom was also Amos. It is chronologically possible that this was the Amos Bigelow who lived here in 1875.

This was the home of local historian Francis Bardwell at the time of his death in 1950. Born in 1867, he was the author of the Tercentenary publication, *Sherborn Historical Sketches*. Henry M. Channing noted at the time of 'Sketches' publication in 1952 that "Regrettably, however, his increasingly absorbing career, of national repute, in charitable and social work, deterred him from the preparation of any formal history."

1999 Update

Leonard Bullard bought this house and barn in 1865 from Rev. Theodore Dorr, pastor of the First Parish Church. Mr. Bullard was assessed for ownership of the house, barn and a horse and carriage. He paid tax on his \$10,000 in investments, a relatively large sum that indicates business and not farming was his primary interest.

The farmer Amos Bigelow, his wife Lucy and son Henry occupied this house by 1875 and husbanded a horse, a cow and a pig on the property. The value of the barn had increased from \$275 to \$650 since 1865, suggesting new construction in the interim. Mr. Bigelow had a carriage and four additional cows by 1885 as well as 40 acres of land used for mowing, tillage, pasture, cranberry growing and even a vineyard which is rare in Sherborn. A storehouse was also present on the property and may have held his grapes and berries, but does not appear to survive. The Bigelows had transferred the property out of the family by 1895 and by 1915, Francis and Mabel Bardwell had acquired it. Francis Bardwell was a historian and philanthropist who kept no animals on the property according to the tax valuations. The land was considered stony pasture by W.P.A. cartographers in 1939. Resident directories from the early 20th century indicate that Mr. Bardwell worked for the commonwealth as inspector of town almshouses.

BIBLIOGRAPHY and REFERENCES

1981 Survey

- Margaret Dowse Buntin's research
- Maps of 1857, 1875 and 1889
- Also Foreword to Sherborn Historical Sketches

1999 Update

- 1981 MHC B form from survey by Edward Gordon
- 1856 Walling Map; 1874 Beers Map; 1889 Walker Map
- 1931 County Commissioners Map of Main and Washington Streets in Registry of Deeds
- Anne C. Shaughnessy - The History of Sherborn and A Guide to Sherborn, , 1974
- Property valuations for the town of Sherborn
- Conversation with Betsy Johnson, 1/99
- History of Middlesex County, Hurd
- Sherborn Vital Records to 1850
- Tax valuations, 1865-1945
- 1855, 1865 state censuses