

91 South Main Street



Thomas Holbrook House

Form No.	134
Town	Sherborn
Address	91 South Main Street
Historic Name	Thomas Holbrook House
Uses: Original	Residence
Present	Residence
Ownership, 1981	Robert W and Margaret Dowse Buntin
" Original	Thomas Holbrook
Constructed	ca. 1780
Source	Deduced from Susan Ware's genealogical work
Style/Form	Cape (enlarged)
Architect	
Ext. Wall Fabric	Clapboard
Outbuildings	Garage
Alterations	3 south rooms (2 down, 1 up) added before Patrick McCarthy (1894) added second story over kitchen. Buntin added last 2 rooms
Moved	From 35 South Main in 1894
Acreage	16.00 acres
Setting:	Set back 250' from heavily traveled South Main St. in the center of a meadow
Recorded by	Edward W. Gordon, June - July 1981

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

Like several other Sherborn Capes this dwelling has been greatly enlarged over the years. This long low structure rises 1 1/2 stories to a gable roof. The northern half is the oldest segment - it dates to ca. 1780. Its doors and windows are simply enframed. This house was "modernized" after it was moved in 1894 from 35 South Main Street. Patrick McCarthy took out the central chimney, old windows, latches etc. Its 3 south rooms were added before 1800. McCarthy added the second story over the kitchen and the present owners added the last two rooms of the ell.

Note: Beams in roof and cellar still have bark on them.

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE

This house originally occupied the site of St. Theresa's Catholic Church (formerly the Almshouse) at 35 South Main St). It has significant historical associations with Thomas Holbrook, a master colonial gun maker. He built the house ca. 1780. He was known for his excellent long rifles. It was Holbrook who helped make Sherborn an important gun making center - a tradition carried on in the 19th century by Leland's and others. He also served as a Selectman - Holbrook moved to South Natick in 1790. It is difficult to determine who owned this property for the next 16 years - it may have belonged to Thomas' son, Thomas. In any event, Joseph Sanger apparently rented this house while he was building his fine Federal residence which occupied the site of the Dowse Memorial Building on North Main St. Sanger owned a store and tavern at the Town Center and was the brother of Sherborn lawyer, politician, real estate tycoon and cotton factory owner, Col. Calvin Sanger (8 Washington St.). Curtis Coolidge bought this house in 1830. By the 1890's the house was vacant. Its land was chosen as the site of the new Almshouse. (The old Almshouse was located on Rockwood St.) In 1894 Patrick McCarthy acquired this house at auction for \$5.00 It cost him \$120.00 to move it to its present site. Patrick McCarthy and Son manufactured McCarthy's Sparkling Cider. They bought Holbrook's world renowned cider mill on Forest St. in 1909. The McCarthy's are credited with the birth of the "tonic" industry. Their first line of soft drinks was called "Shawmut". This business passed from father to son (Charles E.) and was in operation until World War II.

BIBLIOGRAPHY and REFERENCES

- Margaret Dowse Buntin's research
- Maps of 1788, 1857, 1875 and 1889
- Anne C. Shaughnessy - A Guide to Sherborn and The History of Sherborn, 1974
- Susan Ware's Genealogical Work - 1981
- 1798 assessors records