

92 South Main Street



Michael Levine House, November 1998

Form No.	339
Town	Sherborn
Address	92 South Main Street
Assessor's #	12/45
USGS Quad	Medfield
Historic Name	Michael Levine House
Uses: Present	Residence
Original	Residence/store
Constructed	ca. 1910
Source	Tax valuations
Style/Form	Bungalow
Architect/Builder	
Exterior Material:	
Foundation	Cobblestone
Wall/Trim	Wood shingle
Roof	Asphalt shingle
Outbuildings	Fence
Alterations	Rear ell and garage added 1967
Condition	Good
Moved	No
Acreage	1 acre
Setting	On state highway
Film Roll/Negative	Roll 3
Recorded by	Sanford Johnson, May 1999

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

Ninety-two South Main Street is a Bungalow form residence with Craftsman style details. The two by four-bay plan rises two and one-half stories to a front-gabled facade with cut-away porches in the left (south) bays of both floors. A one-story addition has been made to the rear and a two-car garage is attached to the north elevation. Windows are primarily 6/1 double-hung sash that are paired in the center of the side elevations. A Queen Anne sash lights the first story of the south wall. A brick chimney marks the roofline of the house. Decorative elements include the wood shingled piers supporting the second story porch, the paneled pilasters supporting the first, exposed rafter ends and the molded cornices. A lattice fence lines the front border of the property at the edge of busy South Main Street. While the house has been altered with the construction of the rear addition and the garage, its appearance retains the intent of the designer.

HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

Built ca. 1910, the Michael Levine House was the location of a small farm consisting of a horse, 2 cows, 50 fowls and a 7 acre cranberry meadow according to tax valuations. Indeed, Michael Levine was described as a farmer in the 1915 and 1917 resident directories. Mr. Levine was a partner for a time with John Jackson in his store near the site of 21 South Main Street. A son named Darwin Levine also lived here at the time and attended Massachusetts Agricultural College. A second dwelling (so called in tax records), a barn and shed were also on the property at that time. The second house was moved to 96 South Main Street and the barn and shed were demolished. Resident directories published in 1930-31 indicate Mr. Levine to be a variety store owner. The 1933 county commissioners' map of Main Street depicts a gas tank (one of 6 in town) and pump in front of the building at the edge of the street, part of an area to be taken by the state for a road widening project. This was probably a part of the grocery store operation, a suggestion supported by the appearance on the 1939 WPA map of a commercial operation in the area. The majority of land around the farm was in use as pasture according to another WPA map from the same year which may mean the Levines raised crops and produced dairy and poultry items for sale at their store. A two acre plot was subdivided around 1940 and transferred to Carlisle (Carl) Levine, another son who had recently attended Harvard University. The store continued in operation until after 1945 according to tax valuations. This was one of the very few Jewish families in town at that time and the last to harvest cranberries commercially. The proceeds paid Harvard tuition for Carl and probably for daughter, Beatrice, who graduated from Wellesley College.

BIBLIOGRAPHY and REFERENCES

- Resident directories, 1898, 1915, 1917, 1930-31.
- 1939 W.P.A. map of Sherborn.
- Conversation with Betsy Johnson 12/98.
- Tax valuations.
- County Commissioners' map of Main Street, 1933.