

22 Washington Street



Hill/Brown/Flagg House

Form Nos.	151 house, 354 barn
Area	A,C,G
Town	Sherborn
Address	22 Washington Street
Assessor's Map	11/20
USGS Map	Medfield
Historic Name	Hill/Brown/Flagg House
Uses: Original	Residence
Present	Residence
Ownership, 1981	James and Patricia Robert
" Original	William Hill
Constructed	House ca. 1740, barn ca. 1925
Source	Margaret Dowse Buntin's research
Style/Form	Country Georgian
Architect	
Ext. Wall Fabric	Clapboard
Outbuildings	Garage/barn
Alterations	House enlarged in 1772, rear wing added ca. 1820, side addition dates to ca. 1900.
Moved	No
Acreage	4.75 acres 1981, 2 acres 1999
Setting:	Situated on a gentle rise overlooking Washington Street and the Center School.
Recorded	July 1981, by Edward W. Gordon

Updated 1999, by Sanford Johnson

Film Roll/Negative Roll 2

X Recommended for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

1981 Survey

The Flagg House provides an opportunity to study the evolution of a New England farmhouse from the mid 18th century to the late 19th century. It is presently undergoing a rehabilitation which appears to respect its 18th and 19th century features. Asbestos shingles and a covered entrance porch have been removed from its highly symmetrical 5 bay main facade. Its narrow windows are simply enframed and its massive, multi-paneled front door appears to date to this house's 1772 remodeling. In that year the house was literally cut in half - it had originally been a two room square stair hall plan. A wide central stair case was placed between the original rooms. An inspection of the attic revealed two chimneys which had once formed a single massive central chimney - no attempt was made to square off these chimneys jagged edges. The rear 1 1/2 story wing appears to date to ca. 1820 - it exhibits small square Federal windows. A one story side addition possesses tongue and groove wainscoting which probably dates to about 1900.

1999 Update

The house at 22 Washington Street (**#151**) survives as it is described on the survey form completed in 1981. The windows, however, have been altered from 2/2 to 6/6 double-hung sash.

The small barn (**#354**) on the property of 22 Washington Street is a one-story, wood shingled, front-gabled building located behind (northwest of) the Georgian style house. The three by two-bay form is clad in wood shingles. Access to the ground story is on the street elevation through swinging doors. A second pair of swinging doors pierces the gable-peak in the facade.

A low stone wall lines the property's edge from the street to the barn in the back yard.

HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

1981 Survey

This house's land is first mentioned in an early 18th century land grant. Its land was originally granted to "certain inhabitants of that part of town called 'Dirty Meadow'" and the grant was confirmed to them by the Town Meeting of March 3rd and 4th 1701. In all there were eight individual shareholders. They sold it to a William Hill in 1739. This house was built in 1740 for Hill and his bride Joanna Sawin. Subsequent 18th century owners included Caleb Greenwood, Zaccheus Hawes and Samuel Stowe, a Revolutionary soldier. Rev. Elijah Brown boarded here when he first came to town as minister of the First Parish Church in 1770. He bought it in 1772, altering and enlarging it. He died in 1816. Flaggs lived in this house until 1981. This house is one of the most architecturally and historically significant structures in Sherborn Center.

Note: Rev. Brown married Abigail Bigelow Flagg, a sister of his first wife. He left the property to her children by her first husband.

1999 Update

In 1856, Jacob B. Flagg owned the farm at 22 Washington Street which, by 1865, included 2 cows, a swine and a "two-year-old", presumably a horse. A storehouse was present in addition to the house and barn, although neither outbuilding exists today. A second barn was on the property by 1875 and a second storehouse by 1885. The storehouses may have been used to house the harvest from the apple orchard described in tax valuations. Eleanor Flagg was the principal occupant during this time and continued in that capacity until 1925 when Jacob B. Flagg assumed proprietorship. At that time, in addition to his house, he owned 30 fowls and an outbuilding described as a barn worth \$100, an appropriate date and value for the existing outbuilding. By the middle of the Great Depression, Mr. Flagg was taxed for ownership of 5 cows and a heifer in addition to his chickens, which continued into the mid 20th century. The land around the Flagg Farm was considered plowable pasture by W.P.A. cartographers in 1939. The Flagg Family sold the property in 1981.

BIBLIOGRAPHY and REFERENCES

1981 Survey

- Maps of 1788, 1857, 1875 and 1889
- "Sherborn Past and Present", 1674-1924
- Margaret Dowse Buntin's research
- Joseph Blanchard's research

1999 Update

- 1981 MHC B form from survey by Edward Gordon
- 1856 Walling Map; 1874 Beers Map; 1889 Walker Map; 1939 W.P.A. Map
- 1932 County Commissioners Map of Washington Street in Registry of Deeds.
- Anne C. Shaughnessy - The History of Sherborn and A Guide to Sherborn, 1974
- Conversation with Betsy Johnson, 1/99
- History of Middlesex County, Hurd
- Tax valuations, 1865-1945
- 1855, 1865 state censuses