

70 Washington Street



Asa Sanger House

Form No.	155
Town	Sherborn
Address	70 Washington Street
Historic Name*	Asa Sanger House
Uses: Original	Residence
Present	Residence
Ownership, 1981	J. Robert O'Donnell
" Original	Asa Sanger
Constructed	1684
Source	Morse - <u>History of Sherborn and Holliston</u> , 1856
Style/Form	Saltbox
Architect	
Ext. Wall Fabric	Wood shingle
Outbuildings	Garage
Alterations	
Moved	No
Acreage	Less than one acre
Setting:	Located in area which retain much of its pre-20th century farming community atmosphere.
Recorded by	Edward W. Gordon, June - July 1981

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

One of several 18th century Sherborn saltboxes, the Asa Sanger house retains an integrity of form, if not fabric. Its clapboards are presently covered with wood shingles. Its highly symmetrical 5 bay main facade features simply, enframed 9/6 windows. Its entrance treatments appear to date to the 1960's - narrow sidelights flank the front door. It is surmounted by a simple entablature. A massive brick chimney projects from the roof's center.

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE

Like many Sherborn, and for that matter New England houses, controversy swirls around the date of construction. Anne C. Shaughnessy supports the theory that it was built in 1684 by Elisha Bullen. (His first child was born in that year). Morse and C. H. Dowse maintain that it was built in 1775. The story has been handed down that Asa, son of Richard Sanger 3rd of 60 Washington Street, was building this house at the time of the Battle of Concord. According to one account "The men were putting on the roof when they heard cannon fire, and left hammers, nails, shingles and headed for Concord" Those who think the house is older say the house was being re-roofed.

Another story associated with this property concerns a rough, rocky bit of woodland to the rear of the house known as the "Goomer". Here, according to legend, is a pirate treasure - two saddle bags filled with gold which was buried in 1704 by Captain Kidd's mate William Bull.

Sangers lived in this house until at least the 1890's. The Sangers were among the Prominent families in Sherborn's history. Asa's father, Richard 3rd amassed a large fortune. He had extensive land holdings both locally and in Maine. While Asa farmed his father's Sherborn land, his brother Joseph inherited the family tavern and store. (Formerly on the site of 3 and 5 North Main Street.) His nephew Col. Calvin Sanger was a successful lawyer, store keeper, factory partner and mill owner. The Colonel lived at 8 Washington St

BIBLIOGRAPHY and REFERENCES

- Maps of 1788, 1857, 1875 and 1889
- Rev. Abner Morse - History of the Towns of Sherborn and Holliston, 1856
- Margaret Dowse Buntin's research
- Anne C. Shaughnessy - A Guide to Sherborn and The History of Sherborn, 1974

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION

Property deed research done since the 1981 survey indicates that this house had owners prior to Asa Sanger. In the book "SHERBORN Images of the past", commemorating the 325th anniversary of the incorporation of Sherborn, this property is referred to as the Bull-Phipps house and its construction dated to about 1706.