

# 63 Western Avenue



*Morton/VanWeiran House, November 1998*

<b>Form Nos.</b>	161 house, 364 barn
<b>Area</b>	
<b>Town</b>	Sherborn
<b>Address</b>	63 Western Avenue
<b>Assessor's Map</b>	2/21
<b>USGS Map</b>	Framingham
<b>Historic Name</b>	Morton/VanWeiran House
<b>Uses: Original</b>	Residence
<b>Present</b>	Residence
<b>Ownership, 1981</b>	Frank and Beth Jenkins
<b>" Original</b>	Morton family
<b>Constructed</b>	House and barn ca. 1900
<b>Source</b>	Owner
<b>Style/Form</b>	Queen Anne
<b>Architect</b>	
<b>Ext. Wall Fabric</b>	Clapboard
<b>Outbuildings</b>	Barn
<b>Alterations</b>	South wing added by Max Ferro in 1980
<b>Moved</b>	No
<b>Acreage</b>	3.50 acres
<b>Setting:</b>	Located in farm-forest area which retains much of its pre-20th rural character.
<b>Recorded</b>	June-July 1981, by Edward W. Gordon
<b>Updated</b>	1999, by Sanford Johnson
<b>Film Roll/Negative</b>	Roll 7

## ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

### 1981 Survey

Between the Civil War and World War I very few houses were built in Sherborn. During the late 19th century residents on outlying farms as well as "in town" continued to live in homesteads built in the 17th, 18th and early 19th century. These houses were constantly being enlarged with ells, bays, porches etc. By the early 20th century new construction was largely limited to "estate" houses in southeastern Sherborn.

The Morton house is one of the very few Sherborn houses built in the 1890's. Only the John Holbrook House (1880) at 44 North Main St. is comparable to this house's complexity of form. Stylistically, this house is Queen Anne verging on the Colonial Revival. Its main facade faces north, its original driveway (now barely visible in pasture land) leads from Brush Hill Road. Essentially rectangular in plan, it rises 2 1/2 stories to wide gables. A bracketed entrance porch projects from its north facade. Its northeast corner is accentuated by a 3 story conical tower. Of interest is the north gable's round arched recessed porch which is enframed by a Colonial Revival molding. Its south ell was built in 1980 by Max Ferro.

### 1999 Update

The Morton-Van Weiran House at Western Avenue (**#161**) survives as it is described on the survey form completed in 1981. No major changes have been carried out since that time that can be determined from Western Avenue.

The one and one-half-story, side-gabled barn (**#364**) on the secluded property is an ornate example with Victorian Eclectic design elements. It may have been built around the time of construction of the house in ca. 1900. A ventilator with louvered openings and a low hipped roof and deep eaves marks the roofline. The central wall gable with hay mow door is located over the vehicle door opening in the facade. The roof is clad in asphalt shingles and the walls in wood clapboards. Decorative elements visible from the road consist of gable returns and decorative trim in the central wall gable. A shed-roofed addition has apparently been made to the rear of the barn. The setting is quite distant from Western Avenue with a band of trees and stone low stone walls between.

## HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

### 1981 Survey

This house was built in 1895 for a family named Morton. Mrs. Morton was a superintendent at the Women's Reformatory in Framingham. The Morton's sold in 1910 to the VanWeirans.

H. A. W. Van Wieran was born in Gottingen Germany in 1862. He sailed for the U.S. in 1891. He was the head of the German Dept. at the New England Conservatory of music from 1900-1903. He taught German at Boston University from 1903-1912. In 1912 he was appointed Prof. of German for Tufts pre-med program. Along with his wife and two daughters he settled in Sherborn in 1910. At the time of his death in 1925 it was noted that Prof. Van Weiran acquired a beautiful estate on Brush Hill 15 years ago and had a hobby of raising fruit."

### 1999 Update

Frances A. and Edward Morton had this house built around 1900 and resided here until approximately 1910 according to tax valuations. The large barn on the property, built around the same time, housed a horse and a cow according the same source. Eight hen houses contained 120 fowls indicating a chicken operation of some size. By 1925, the new owners, George Van Wieran and his wife Jean, were keeping

60 fowls in two hen houses. There is no mention of a barn but there is a garage which may be the previously named barn with an updated title. A water works had also been constructed by this time. While W.P.A. maps from 1939 do not describe the residence as a farm, there were orchards nearby which had belonged to the Van Wierans. Other parcels of land were used for pasture while the majority of the surroundings were wooded.

## **BIBLIOGRAPHY and REFERENCES**

### 1981 Survey

- Owner - Mrs. Frank Jenkins
- Not on maps of 1875 or 1889
- Interview with Edith V. Philbrook and Florence M. (Philbrook) Wentworth

### 1999 Update

- 1981 MHC B form from survey by Edward Gordon
- 1889 Walker Map; 1939 W.P.A. Map
- Tax valuations for the town of Sherborn 1865-1945
- Conversation with Betsy Johnson, 1/99