

190 Western Avenue



Joseph Crackbone House, March 1999

Form Nos. 166 house, 370 coop, 371 hen house 372 shed, 373 brooder house, 374 piggery, 375 garage, 935 stone wall

Area

Town Sherborn
Address 190 Western Avenue
Assessor's Map 3/19
USGS Map Medfield

Historic Name Joseph Crackbone House

Uses: Original Residence
Present Residence/Farmer Braun's Herbs

Ownership, 1981 Robert and Phyllis Braun
" Original Joseph Crackbone

Constructed House ca. 1750, Hen house/shed/brooder house/piggery garage/stone wall ca. 1900, chicken coop ca. 1920

Source Morse - History of Sherborn and Holliston

Style/Form Georgian with Greek Revival entrance

Architect

Ext. Wall Fabric Shingle

Outbuildings Barns, chicken coop, pump house

Alterations Rear and side additions date to mid 19th and early 20th century.

Moved No

Acreage Part of 50 acres 1981, 43 acres 1999

Setting: Located in the heart of West Sherborn's farm country which retains much of its pre-20th century rural charm.

Recorded June-July 1981, by Edward W. Gordon
Updated 1999, by Sanford Johnson

Film Roll/Negative Roll 12

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

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

1981 Survey

Built c. 1750, this farmhouse's main block rises 2 1/2 stories to a gable roof. A tall brick chimney projects from the center of the roof. In the center of its 5 bay main facade is a handsome entrance - its front door is flanked by narrow multi-pane sidelights and wood panels and Doric pilasters. Crowning the front door is a pediment which contains a recessed triangular panel. Wings project from its gable and rear walls. Several outbuildings on the property are of considerable age (at least late 19th century). This is one of several farmhouses along Western Ave. which provide a glimpse of life on a pre 20th century Sherborn farm.

1999 Update

The house at 190 Western Avenue (**#166**) survives as it is described on the survey form completed in 1981. No major changes have been carried out since that time.

The farm is focused around a Colonial style, side-gabled five by two-bay residence with a center brick chimney. Enclosed porches expand the plan at both side walls and a two-story rear ell enlarges the house in the rear. The center entry is articulated with a pedimented hood supported by pilasters with molded caps. One-half length side-lights flank the door. Windows are typically 6/1 double-hung sash with some 10/1 and 6/6 examples.

A variety of outbuildings exists. The largest is the one and one-half-story shed (**#372**). It is lit on the east side elevation with six windows. The walls are clad in wood clapboards and the roof in asphalt shingles. The piggery (**#374**) is north of the shed. This building is clad in wood clapboards and lit by 2/2 double-hung sash. A chimney occupies the center of the roofline. The brooder house (**#373**) is adjacent to the north wall of the piggery and is clad in wood shingles. Access to this building is through a single pass door on the east wall. The hen house (**#371**) is west of the piggery and shed. This is a diminutive building with a gabled roof. The shed, piggery and hen house are not painted and are located south of the house. These buildings are used by Phyllis Braun, the current owner, for her herb and dried flower arrangement business. The garage (**#375**) is north of the house. This is clad in wood clapboards painted white to resemble the house and appears to be newer than other outbuildings on the property. The chicken coop (**#370**) is a long, side gabled building partly visible west of the house. It is a two-story building with rows of large windows. A stone well with gabled cover is also behind the house. Stone walls (**#935**) line the driveway south of the house among the several outbuildings there. The farm complex is well-maintained.

HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

1981 Survey

This house was apparently completed about the time of Joseph Crackbone's marriage to Lucy Coolidge (1750). Lucy was the daughter of Isaac and Hannah Morse Coolidge. Her sisters' Sherborn houses are still extant in 1981 - Hannah married Thomas Russell and built 126 Coolidge Street and Grace married

Ezra Holbrook and built 67 South Main Street.

By 1875 Artemus J. Leland owned this house. In 1889 it belonged to a D. Leland. The Fitts family who used the farm as a summer place, remodeled it in the early 1900's.

1999 Update

The Joseph Crackbone house was built ca. 1750 for the Sherborn farmer. His descendants sold the farm to Artemas Johnson Leland around 1850. Mr. Leland farmed the property with his wife Eliza and their 8 children until ca. 1880. Mr. Leland husbanded 2 horses, 2 cows and a swine on approximately 25 acres during the period. He maintained an orchard and also a slaughter house which is a rarity in the tax valuations. Around 1880, the youngest son, Dexter, assumed proprietorship of the farm. Dexter maintained the scale and focus of his father's operation until around 1890. Shortly afterward, Framingham residents George and Arthur Fitts bought the property for use as a summer home. The Fitts's maintained a herd of cows, for whom they built silos which are no longer extant. They remodeled the house and added the side porches now existing. The south porch was an open-walled sleeping porch through the 1950s after which it was enclosed.

Outbuildings on the property were built after the turn of the 20th century. The chicken coop was constructed around 1920 based on its appearance and the construction dates of coops of similar scale in the town. Two silos were built in the early 20th century and removed sometime later.

BIBLIOGRAPHY and REFERENCES

1981 Survey

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

1999 Update

- 1981 MHC B form from survey by Edward Gordon
- 1856 Walling Map; 1874 Beers Map; 1889 Walker Map
- Anne C. Shaughnessy - History of Sherborn and A Guide to Sherborn, 1974
- Tax valuations for the town of Sherborn
- 1855, 1865 state censuses