

266 Western Avenue



Morse-Tay-Leland-Hawes House

Form No.	168
Town	Sherborn
Address	266 Western Avenue
Historic Name	Morse-Tay-Leland-Hawes House
Uses: Original	Residence
Present	Residence
Ownership, 1981	Daniel Travers
" Original	James Morse
Constructed	ca. 1700
Source	"Sherborn Past and Present 1674-1924"
Style/Form	Georgian
Architect	
Ext. Wall Fabric	Clapboard
Outbuildings	Attached shed
Alterations	Barn on property to northwest is no longer extant
Moved	No
Acreage	2.00 acres
Setting:	Located close to road in heart of Western Ave. farm country, area's pre-20th century rural charm still intact.
Recorded by	Edward W. Gordon, June - July 1981.

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

This is one of Sherborn's most attractive 18th century farmhouses. Composed of a 2 1/2 story main block and one story rear wing. Its elegant surface treatments - late Georgian in style - were probably added by Dr. Tay in the 1770's or 1780's. Its 4 bay main facade features a graceful doorway which attests to the skill of the country carpenter/builder. Its front door is flanked by narrow Doric pilasters. Above the front door is a semicircular fanlight which contains Gothicized tracery. Crowning the entrance is a dentillated pediment. Above the 12/8 upper windows is a dentillated cornice. Located in the center of its eastern gable wall is another entrance which is surmounted by a multi-pane transom and simple pediment. Once the home of one of the town's most prominent citizens (Dr. Tay) this house is currently undergoing much needed repairs.

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE

This house was built about 1700 by James Morse (born 1686), son of Capt. Joseph Morse, on land which his father drew in a division of "common land" in west Sherborn. James Morse married Ruth Sawin - their children were born between 1709 and 1720. James' daughter Ruth inherited this property and she married Joshua Leland. On the death of Joshua in the 1770's this house was conveyed to Dr. Jonathan Tay who came from Salem to make his home in Sherborn and married Mary Holbrook. He had an extensive practice despite competition from Dr. Tapley Wyeth who lived at 46 North Main St. It is interesting to note that Brook St. to the north of this house was long known Dr. Tay's Lane.

The Tay's daughter, Betsy, married Hopestill Leland, son of Lt. Hopestill Leland, and inherited this house. This property is labeled Amos Leland on both the 1875 and 1889 maps. In recent years Sylvia Hawes, a direct descendant of the Lelands, Tays and Morses, has lived in this house.

BIBLIOGRAPHY and REFERENCES

- "Sherborn past and Present 1674-1924" - Sherborn Historical Society
- Margaret Dowse Buntin's research
- Anne C. Shaughnessy - A Guide to Sherborn, 1974
- "Historical Sketches, Sherborn Tercentenary 1652-1952"
- Maps of 1788, 1857, 1875 and 1889