

FORM A - AREA

Assessor's Sheets USGS Quad Area Letter Form Numbers in Area

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
MASSACHUSETTS ARCHIVES BUILDING
220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD
BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

See Data Sheet	Marion	MRN.Q	See Data Sheet
----------------	--------	-------	----------------

Photograph



Town/City: Marion

Place (*neighborhood or village*): Old Landing

Name of Area: Old Landing Wharf / Burr Brothers Boatyard

Present Use: Commercial marina / Residential

Construction Dates or Period: Early 19th to early 21st century

Overall Condition: Good

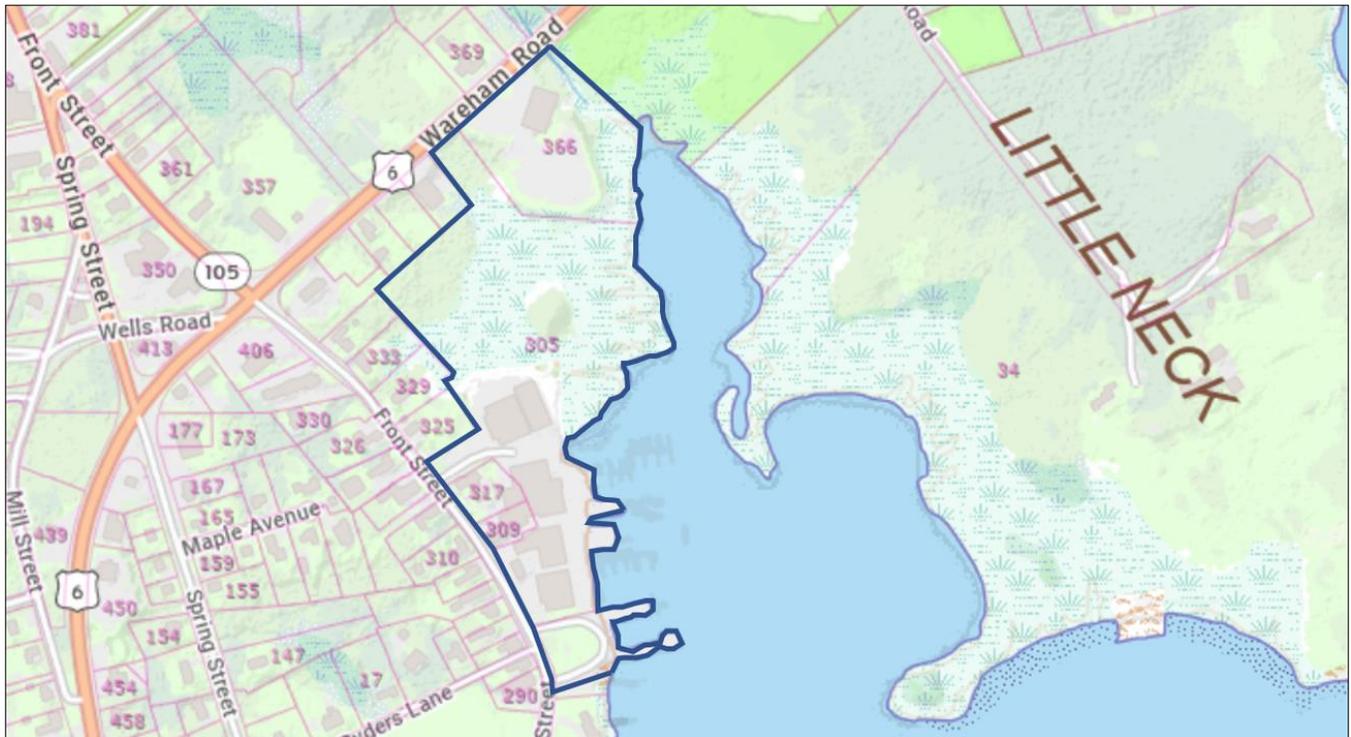
Major Intrusions and Alterations: No intrusions, some alterations to 20th c. structures

Acreage: 19.28

Recorded by: Lynn Smiledge

Organization: Marion Historical Commission

Date (*month/year*): November 2022



see continuation sheet

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Area Letter Form Nos.

MRN.Q

See Data Sheet

Recommended for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.
If checked, you must attach a completed National Register Criteria Statement form.

INTRODUCTION

The Old Landing Wharf and Burr Brothers Boatyard Area (MRN.Q) in Marion is located on the northwest shore of Sippican Harbor. The subject area is bounded by Route 6 to the north and runs north to south on the east side of Front Street opposite the Old Landing Area (MRN.I), with which it shares much of its history. It encompasses five parcels and slightly more than 19 acres — a significant portion of which is tidal marshland. In the 19th and 20th centuries this area was the site of commercial wharves and boatbuilding enterprises; local histories suggest that boatbuilding activities began in this area as early as the mid-18th century, but firm documentation for this has not yet been found. The area today comprises a commercial boatyard owned and operated by Burr Brothers Boats, Inc., two wharves with boat slips and a boat launching ramp for public use, and the town of Marion Veterans Memorial Park. All of the buildings in the area are now used for commercial purposes. Two of the structures are mid-19th century dwellings purchased later by the boatyard, and the remainder are 20th and 21st century commercial buildings built between 1940 and 2017 according to town assessor's records. The key features in this heritage landscape are the harbor and the way in which wharves and buildings are arranged in relation to the shoreline.

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

The boatyard buildings are set at the edge of Sippican Harbor and cover most of the waterfront lots comprising the Burr Brothers-owned property. The largest buildings include five harborside structures used for boat repairs and storage and referred to by the company as "sheds." The remaining buildings face Front Street and include an office building with a retail component, a former dwelling that now serves as the boat yard's main office, and a former dwelling used for both residential and commercial purposes. The former dwellings date to the mid-19th century, and the Front Street-facing component of the Main and Spar Shed building appears to date to the late 19th century. The large sheds date to the 20th and early 21st centuries.

A granite seawall topped with large granite slab copings extends north from the Old Landing wharves along the harbor edge bordering the boatyard. A granite wharf with a full cradle crane system for hoisting boats extends into the harbor opposite the Main and Spar Shed building; it is flanked to the north by a gas dock and two boat docks, and on the south by another boat dock. The grounds surrounding the buildings comprise gravel, dirt, and macadam parking areas for both vehicles and boats stored on trailers and dry dock cradles. Vegetation is limited to areas of lawn and mature trees around the two former dwellings and a stand of trees marking the northern boundary of the boatyard.

Wharves

The Old Landing Wharf (MRN.921) comprises two town-owned historic wharves, the former Hathaway and Delano wharves, that jut into Sippican Harbor at the south end of this area. Both have stone and mortar bases with concrete decking and extend into the water from the town parking lot at the Veterans Memorial Park. The Burr Brothers Boatyard includes a number of wooden docks on pilings.

Buildings

The building names used in this area form are based on the current terminology used by the boatyard proprietors. They depart from those used on the 2002 MHC Area Form Q and are employed to increase clarity and to account for the building demolitions and alterations that have taken place at the boatyard since then. See Figure 12 to see the building locations on the site.

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Area Letter

Form Nos.

MRN.Q

See Data Sheet

Office / Retail Store (MRN.334)

This wood-shingled building with wood trim rests on a high concrete block foundation. It was built in 1954 according to town assessor records. The building faces Front Street and has a rectangular plan comprised of a two-story north block and a one-story east block, both with shallow-pitched gable roofs with wide overhangs. The two-story block has double-hung six-over-six windows at the second story and two-over-two windows at the first story. A shed-roofed open porch at the north elevation shelters an entry approached by a five-step wooden stair running parallel to the north wall. The one-story south block has contemporary fenestration including a large display window at the south bay at the façade (west elevation). A glass-and-panel door fronting a two-step concrete stair occupies the north bay.

South Sheds (MRN.335)

The most southern structure on the property, this long front-gabled building with flanking shed-roofed side wings was constructed in 1964. It is clad with vertical boards that according to the current owner are recycled barn siding. Three tall sliding doors rise to the shallow gable peak on the harborside (east) elevation, which has vertical board infill. The doors are hung on exterior tracks with track hoods. The shed wings at this elevation are clad in sheet metal panels. A single tall sliding door is centered on the west elevation facing Front Street; it is flanked by double-leaf wood doors at the wings. Horizontal courses of vent panels wrap the building at its cornices.

North Shed (MRN.336)

This two-story, flat-roofed, T-shaped building is the largest on the site and is connected to the former dwelling (now the boat yard office) at 309 Front Street (MRN.129) by an intermediate structure. It is sided with standing seam metal panels and has a metal roof; it is sparsely fenestrated with garage openings at the first floor and contemporary window openings at the second story. A metal balcony at the second level overlooks Sippican Harbor on the harborside (east) elevation; it is surmounted by a Texaco sign sheltered under a shallow-pitched gable roof. This metal structure was built in 2017 and replaced an earlier gabled building described on the 2002 MHC Area Form Q. Extending at an angle from the southwest corner of this building is an intermediate two-story structure with a shallow gabled roof. Clad in a combination of wood shingles and vertical boards, it has display windows at its southwest corner but is otherwise sparsely fenestrated with small openings. This structure attaches to the rear (east) wall of the former dwelling at 309 Front Street.

Main and Spar Sheds (MRN.337)

This wood-frame structure, which comprises three blocks with telescoping gable roofs, is the most prominent boatyard building. Its oldest component, a one-and-one-half-story front-gabled block facing Front Street, displays a three-bay, wood-shingled facade with a parapet wall containing the lettering "BURR BROS BOATS." This block appears to date to the late 19th century. (See Figure 8.) Full-height vertical board sliding doors at the southernmost bay have small diamond-shaped lights centered on each panel. A six-panel wood door occupies the center bay and a diamond-shaped light set at the second story at the northernmost bay surmounts a shallow opening with a vertical-board awning blind. The side elevations of this early section of the building have paired six-over-six, double-hung sash on the north wall and tall eight-light fixed sash on the south wall. This portion of the building contains the carpenter shop.

The center block of this building aligns along the south elevation of the oldest block and projects one bay beyond its north elevation. It is sided with vertical boards and has an entry in the projecting bay. The third gable-front section facing the harbor contains large sliding vertical-board doors; it is flanked to the south by a shallow shed-roofed wing clad on the harbor-facing side with vertical boards and metal panels. Like the adjacent building to the south (South Sheds), it has vent panels at the cornice.

Northwest Sheds (MRN.338)

The northernmost buildings on the site located off Front Street are two standing-seam metal-sided storage buildings set parallel to each. Both have shallow-pitched metal roofs and face south with full-height openings. The east building has sliding standing-seam doors and the west building has a sliding door and three overhead doors.

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Area Letter

Form Nos.

MRN.Q

See Data Sheet

Storage / Sales Building (366 Wareham Street, MRN.339)

This long, side-gabled building is sited on Wareham Street at the northern boundary of the boatyard and faces north. The one-story structure was constructed in 1966 of pre-fabricated units sided with vertical boards. It has an asphalt shingle roof. A centered entry at the façade (north elevation) with a Colonial Revival surround is flanked by large picture windows. Large, paired display windows occupy the northeast and northwest corners of the building. A curved gravel driveway enters and exits the property from Wareham Street at the facade. Small boats are stored behind the building in an open yard that abuts marshland.

The former dwelling at 309 Front Street (ca. 1850, Pardon Tripp House, MRN.129) is a west-facing wood-frame building set close to the street. Constructed in the Greek Revival style, it comprises a one-and-one-half-story, front-gabled, three-bay-by-four bay main block with two one-story flat-roofed dependencies and a gabled rear addition. The building rests on a granite foundation and the additions have concrete-parged masonry foundations. The structure is clad in wood clapboards and the roof is surfaced with asphalt shingles. The main block is trimmed with a box cornice, one and two-part frieze boards, eave returns, and corner pilasters. The side hall main entry at the northernmost bay contains a five-panel wood door framed by partial-height sidelights and pilasters supporting a denticulated entablature; the partial sidelights are characteristic of the earlier Federal style which preceded the Greek Revival style. The windows throughout are single, double-hung, six-over-one replacement sash with flat surrounds and capped lintels. A rectangular eyebrow window at the main block, seen in an early photograph of the house and a distinctive feature of the Greek Revival style, has been obscured by the south addition. A two-bay shed wall dormer occupies the south roof slope. The north and east additions have early features and are shown on the 1879 map; the flat roof and paired cornice brackets at the north addition reflect the Italianate style. This building currently houses the boatyard's main office and is connected at its rear elevation to the North Shed building. See also MHC Building Form B MRN.129.

317 Front Street (ca. 1842, Capt. Peleg Blankenship House, MRN.132), the second former dwelling incorporated into the boatyard, is constructed in the Greek Revival style but also has earlier, Federal-style features. This wood-frame building comprises a one-and-one-half-story, front-gabled, three-bay-by-three bay main block with a full-width porch and two side-gabled, one-story dependencies at the south elevation. The dependencies include an early ell, which is seen on the 1855 map, and a 20th century addition. The main and center blocks rest on a granite block foundation and the south block has a concrete foundation. The building is clad in wood clapboards at all elevations apart from the south elevation of the south block, which is clad in wood shingles. Tall corbeled brick chimneys rise from the south roof slope at the main block and the roof ridge at the center block. The roof is surfaced with asphalt shingles. The main block is trimmed with a box cornice, frieze boards, short eave returns, and narrow molded corner pilasters. The side hall main entry at the northernmost bay contains a six-panel wood door framed by partial-height sidelights and a paneled surround. The door enframing, which comprises corner blocks and a rectangular pediment, resembles those seen in Asher Benjamin's 1830s pattern books. The full-width skirted porch, likely added in the late 19th or early 20th century, has a shallow hipped roof and a molded entablature supported by Doric columns. The windows at the main block are single, double-hung, one-over-one replacement sash with flat surrounds and splayed lintels. Two one-bay gabled wall dormers flank a one-bay gabled dormer at the south roof slope. See also MHC Building Form B MRN.132.

Veterans Park

The park is sited south of and adjacent to the Burr Brothers boatyard. It comprises an expanse of lawn enclosed within a U-shaped driveway that enters and exits from Front Street and extends east to the town wharves at the waterfront, where it expands to provide diagonal parking. The park is bisected by a curved gravel walkway that joins the two arms of the U. The portion of the park east of the walkway is bordered by granite posts linked by metal chains. Four stone monuments are symmetrically placed near the center of the park and a flagpole is sited closer to the harbor near the base of the U. Small trees, planting beds, and seating units are uniformly placed around the monuments. A boat propellor mounted on a masonry pier is sited at each end of the walkway.

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Area Letter Form Nos.

MRN.Q

See Data Sheet

HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

Located in southeastern Massachusetts on the shore of Buzzards Bay, Marion was originally called Sippican (“the long river”) by the Wampanoag native people who had inhabited this area for millennia. They visited the area seasonally, to hunt and harvest fish and shellfish and had settlements at the head and mouth of Sippican Harbor. English settlers from nearby Plymouth Colony who also sought to take advantage of the rich natural resources of the area arrived in the last quarter of the 17th century. Within a few decades the indigenous peoples were for the most part displaced by the colonists.

Marion was originally a district of Rochester which included the towns of Rochester, Marion, Mattapoisett, and parts of Wareham. It was incorporated as a separate town in 1852. Sippican Harbor, which the town straddles, served as the basis of the town’s economic development from its earliest days. It provided convenient access to Buzzards Bay and the Atlantic Ocean and facilitated the growth of the town as a port and coastal trading center. The large, protected harbor was relatively shallow, however, limiting the size of the vessels which could call at Marion. The depth of the harbor also constrained ship building to small and medium-sized watercraft. A related industry, salt making, became one of the principal enterprises in the town. Salt was an important commodity used in the preservation of food and would become one of the major products traded through the harbor at Marion. Several saltworks along the western shore of Sippican Harbor produced salt from the solar evaporation of sea water. They were in operation well into the 19th century.

Two commercial and residential town centers emerged on the western shore of Sippican Harbor. Old Landing, the earliest center at the head of the harbor where the subject area is located, was established around 1700¹ The 1830 plan of Rochester (see Figure 1) shows Old Landing with a wharf. The southern village, originally called Wharf Village and now known simply as Marion Village, became the town center and had two commercial wharves at the harbor.

Maritime industries were dominant in Marion until the mid-19th century, when the advent of rail service diminished the importance of coastal shipping and began to facilitate tourism. At the same time, new cultural and educational institutions endowed by the founder of the nearby Tabor Academy, Elizabeth P. Taber, dramatically enriched the town and helped to make its reputation as a summer vacation destination for the city dwellers of Boston and New York. The watercraft seen at the wharves and the boatyards of the town shifted from commercial fishing and coasting vessels to the elegant yachts and motor launches owned by wealthy seasonal residents.

Old Landing Wharves

The two wharves found at Old Landing were among the earliest built in Marion. A detail of the 1830 plan (Figure 1) for Rochester shows the Old Landing area with a dozen buildings and what appears to be a single wharf projecting into the harbor. This area became the home of many sea captains and others making their livings from the sea. The 1855 map inset for Old Landing (Figure 2) shows two wharves reaching out into Sippican Harbor — Hathaway’s on the north and Delano’s on the south. While the full identity of the proprietors of these eponymous wharves remains uncertain, David Hathaway and Ward Parker Delano respectively seem the most likely.

During the first half of the 19th century, salt was one of the principal goods being loaded on to outbound ships. Marion was a leading salt producer on the eastern seaboard of the United States. Salt was traded for a variety of goods including hard wood needed for ship building. The wharf owners received a fee based on the quantity of goods being loaded and unloaded.

¹ Rosbe, Judith. *Maritime Marion*, Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2002.

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Area Letter Form Nos.

MRN.Q	See Data Sheet
-------	----------------

The town of Marion purchased the two wharves (Hathaway's and Delano's) and surrounding parcels of land in 1911. The wharves and surrounding area now serve the boating public, providing access to Sippican Harbor with a boat launching ramp and slips along the wharves. It is also the site of the Veterans Memorial Park.

North Wharf — Hathaway's Wharf

Born in Freetown, David Hathaway (1788-1861) was the son of Gilbert Hathaway (1745-1829) and Mary Evans (1751-1826). He was married in Rochester in 1811 to Abigail Keen (1787-1878), daughter of John Keen (1744-1812) and Mary Clifton (1746-1822), with whom he had a very large family. He owned a house a short distance away at 304 Front Street (ca. 1856, David Hathaway House, MRN.127). While several sources assert that David Hathaway was a shipbuilder and owner of this wharf, the 1850 and 1855 censuses report his occupation as farmer, and in the 1860 census his occupation was listed as merchant. David Hathaway appears to have been quite prosperous and it is likely that his business as a merchant was transacted through trade operations at the wharf. His 1861 will devised his considerable estate, which consisted of a number of properties and businesses, to his wife Abigail and his son Honorable Gilbert Hathaway (1813-1871). Title research shows a clear chain of ownership of the property which includes the north wharf from the heirs of David K. Hathaway through to its most recent conveyance to the Town of Marion in 1911. The property was inherited by his wife Abigail Keen Hathaway (1787-1878) and then his surviving children: John Keen Hathaway (1815-1879), Sarah M. Allen (1821-1883), Abby Hathaway (1828-1901), and Mary Hines (1816-1887) and a grandson, James Scott Hammond Pitcher Hathaway (1834-1887). The heirs sold the property for \$500 in 1874 to Stephen D. Hadley, who immediately sold it to Abigail M. Delano (1821-1899). She left the property to her children Stephen Clark Luce Delano (1848-1910), Charles Henry Leonard Delano (1859-1911), and Elizabeth Delano, the widow of her son James (1846-1901). Stephen and Elizabeth Delano sold their interest to Charles Henry Leonard Delano. After his death the property passed to the children of his brother Stephen, who included George Delano (1874-1949). George Delano conveyed the north wharf and land to the Town in 1911.

North Wharf Title History

Date	Book-Page	Grantor	Grantee
12-26-1911	1099-543	George Delano et al.	Town of Marion
Probate		Charles H.L. Delano	George Delano et al.
853-422	853-422	Stephen C.L. Delano & Elizabeth Delano	Charles H.L. Delano
11-17-1874	418-60	Stephen D. Hadley	Abby Delano
11-02-1874	418-61	John K. Hathaway et al.	Stephen D. Hadley

South Wharf — Delano's Wharf

Immediately to the east of Delano's Wharf, the 1855 map shows a building (no longer extant) marked as W.P. Delano's Store. Ward Parker Delano (1819-1867) was the son of Stephen Delano (1785-1858) and Sally Haskell (1785-1840). A large and prominent family in Marion, the Delanos were descendants of Philip Delano, a Huguenot who arrived at Plymouth Colony in 1621. The family shared its lineage with many notable Americans including Franklin Delano Roosevelt. Ward Delano was first married to Amanda Fitzalan Delano (1819-1856) and after her death to Annie M. Delano (1828-1884). Delano was a merchant whose house was located directly across from the store at 296 Front Street (ca. 1780, Ward P. Delano House, WLF.124) The store served as the home for the Pythagorean Masonic Lodge, of which Ward Delano was a charter member. The store was later owned by Ward Delano's son-in-law and cousin Charles Henry Delano (1834-1922), who was married to Anna Maria Richmond (1853-1903).

Title research for the south wharf and parcel shows a clear chain of ownership back to Ward Parker Delano. His children Benjamin Franklin Delano (1860-1916) and Sallie Haskell Delano (1859-1927) and widow Annie M. Delano conveyed the property in 1885 to George Delano for \$1,600. George Delano (1821-1890) was from another branch of this very large Marion family and was the son of Capt. James Delano (1789-1875) and Dorothy Wing (1794-1865). George Delano's wife

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Area Letter Form Nos.

MRN.Q

See Data Sheet

Abbie; children Stephen Clark Luce Delano (1848-1910) and Charles Henry Leonard Delano (1859-1911); and Elizabeth Delano, the widow of the couple's son James (1846-1901); inherited this property after his death. Stephen and Elizabeth Delano sold their interest to Charles Henry Leonard Delano. After his death the property passed to the children of his brother Stephen, including George Delano (1874-1949) who in 1911 conveyed the north wharf and land to the town.

South Wharf Title History

Date	Book-Page	Grantor	Grantee
12-26-1911	1099-543	George Delano et al.	Town of Marion
Probate		Charles H.L. Delano	George Delano et al.
12-15-1902	853-422	Stephen C.L. Delano & Elizabeth Delano	Charles H.L. Delano
01-12-1885	515-171	Annie M., Benjamin F. & Sally H. Delano	George Delano
Probate		Ward Parker Delano	Annie M., Benjamin F. & Sally H. Delano

Dwelling Houses

The Greek Revival-style **Pardon Tripp House** at **309 Front Street** (ca. 1850, MRN.129) appears on the 1855 and 1879 maps with P. Tripp shown as owner and on the 1903 map with Mrs. S.E. Leonard as owner. Pardon Tripp (b. 1815) purchased this plot of land for \$40 in 1864 from sea captain Leonard A. Bolles (1800-1867). Since the house appeared on the map in 1855 but the land transfer to Tripp didn't occur until 1864, it is likely that Bolles had allowed Tripp to build the subject house on a portion of his land under a rental arrangement. Bolles later subdivided the land and sold Tripp "his portion." Pardon Tripp was married in Rochester in 1844 to Fanny Clifton (1817-1892) and likely built this house sometime between 1845 and 1855. Fanny Tripp died in 1892 and the house was sold the following year to Sarah E. Leonard, the widow of Seth Cobb Leonard (1808-1872), an expressman responsible for ensuring the safe delivery of gold or currency being shipped by railroad in a secure "express car." Subsequent owners included the widow Melissa Corse (1869-1954), who purchased the property in 1916. The Corse family retained ownership of the property until its sale in 1962 to Burr Brothers Boats, Inc. See also MHC Building Form MRN.129.

The **Capt. Peleg Blankinship House** at **317 Front Street** (ca.1842, MRN.132) appears on the 1855 and 1879 maps with P. Blankinship shown as owner. Master mariner Peleg Blankinship purchased a "house lot" in 1842 from David Hathaway (1788-1861), a merchant and the owner of Hathaway's Wharf as described above. Hathaway was a large property owner in the area and occupied the house at 304 Front Street (ca. 1846, David Hathaway House, MRN.127). Capt. Peleg Blankinship (1809-1891) was married to Eliza Hadley (1812-1887), the sister of Old Landing area homeowners Capt. Joseph Emerson Hadley (1817-1897), Capt. Stephen Delano Hadley (1814-1892), and Marion store owner and merchant Andrew Johnson Hadley (1820-1897). Peggy and Eliza Blankinship had one daughter, Minnie Mott Blankinship Besse (b.1855), who inherited the house and appears to have used it as a rental property until its sale in 1937. Philadelphia lawyer Oswald Chew (1876-1948), who owned waterfront property in Marion at 29 Water Street (ca. 1915, Mary A. Knowlton House, MRN.502) and was active in the Marion real estate market, facilitated the sale of this property to Osmond and Emily Brown. The house was held by a number of subsequent owners until its sale in 2003 to Burr Brothers Boats, Inc. It now maintains both residential and commercial use. See also MHC Building Form MRN.132.

Early Boat Yards

Several sources suggest that Old Landing was home to ship and boat building as early as 1740. While the relative shallowness of the harbor limited the size of vessels which might have been built here to those of a moderate draft, it appears to have been a significant part of the local economy. It has been stated that some 52 ships were built in Marion between 1759 to 1854.²

² Rosbe, Judith. *Maritime Marion*, Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2002.

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Area Letter Form Nos.

MRN.Q

See Data Sheet

John Delano (1817-1900), son of Capt. James Delano (1789-1875) and Dorothy Wing (1794-1865) and the brother of George Delano (see the Delano's Wharf history above), was noted to be a ship builder and a master ship's carpenter in the 1860 and 1880 censuses respectively, and he reportedly built five ships at Delano's Wharf in the Old Landing.³

An undated handwritten history of the boatyards at Old Landing written on the back of a photograph by a Marion resident, John Henry Bates (1892-1965), provides an intriguing view of the development of shipbuilding here in the early 19th century. The photograph is in the collection of the Sippican Historical Society. Bates alludes to boatbuilding conducted by Leonard Bolles followed by Thomas Mayo. His history is congruent with biographical and property title research and provides indirect confirmation that this section of Marion was indeed a center for boatbuilding. The following is a transcript of Bates' handwritten history.

"The Last Look." The Old Bolles Homestead in the Old Landing. Built sometime after the great gale and high water of September 23, 1815, on the east side of Front Street [being] as a certain Leonard Bolles had started a shipyard up there sometime between 1816 or 1820 and ran it for years down to about 1860 or so. His son Leonard [A.] Bolles lived there for years and was a one arm man [illegible] later had a new home built on the west side of Milk Street at the head of [illegible] lane and sold the whole place including about 2 acres of marsh also to a certain Thomas Mayo who ran a boat yard there later and built some large boat storage buildings and also a work shop up towards the street. He fell overboard and drowned while bringing a sloop down from Boston in the summer of 1914 — (a very strange case anyway). Later on, a certain Stephen J. Watts from Maine bought the boatyard part and continue business along the same line in 1917. Mrs. Mayo kept the rest of the property 'till 1922 when she sold it to Charles Lincoln Holmes of Fall River, a bank president who made a few alterations and used it as a summer residence up to 1923-4 and sold it to Watts who later made a boatyard office out of it [illegible] using the living room as an office. And so continued until September 23, 1938, when a tremendous hurricane completely demolished it by high water. The large southerly room on the right side of the front door was also used as a gift shop also at the time of the hurricane by Caroline Eastman. Quite a lot of the gifts was recovered later from under the sand and stones in good condition. Some of course were smashed. Watts later on cleared the place and filled in the area with dredging from the cove later on and bought another building and [illegible] for storage of lumber, stock room and office also 'till the 1944 hurricane [illegible] 'till Watts' death in 1953. Then in the spring of 1954, Watts' widow Eunice sold out to Burr Brothers of Mattapoisett who continued the place as a boatyard and the building as an office and display and sales room 'till the great hurricane of August 31, 1954, knocked it askew again so they had to take part of it down and rebuild the rest up on a higher foundation on which it stands at present."

"Another interesting fact is that during the late summer of 1925 when the trenches were being dug for the cement foundation walls for the new storage building that were to be built soon thereafter, the Henry Wing's Co. men who had the job of digging the trenches and putting in the foundations, came across large sunken timbers that lay cross ways of the trenches about 2 feet below the surface of the marsh; (it caused some wonderment at find such timbers anywhere from 12 to 15-18 inches in diameter [illegible] on the surface, but was finally surmised that they were part of the [illegible] works of the old launching ways of the old shipyard that was formerly there. And it seems that after the yard was done away with the place was used as a dumping ground later and was gradually filled up to meet street level. Hence finding of the big timbers [illegible] under the fill when trenches were being dug for the foundation for the new buildings when Watts the new owner decided to put up some good building after taking down the [illegible] that Tom Mayo [illegible] and built. This is about all of the

³ Ibid.

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Area Letter Form Nos.

MRN.Q

See Data Sheet

history that I can give on it at present. Signed John Henry Bates. 86 Mill Street, Marion, Plymouth County, Mass.”

The boatyard currently in operation at Old Landing has a clearly documented history beginning early in the 20th century. It was first run by Stephen J. Watts and then later by its current owners, Burr Brothers Boats, Inc.

S.J. Watts Boatyard (1918-1954)

The boatyard today is a complex of seven buildings occupying more than 18 acres at the head of Sippican Harbor on its western shore. The property consists of seven parcels of land which were acquired between 1918 and 2003. Steven J. Watts opened his boatyard here in 1918 after purchasing two properties from Martha S. Mayo (b.1869), the widow of Thomas W. Mayo (b.1863). Steven Watts' 1953 obituary noted that he had taken over operation of a boatyard owned by Mayo.⁴ Census and city directory records do not show Mayo as a boatbuilder and the 1910 census and the 1907 Wareham city directory (Marion section) report that Mayo was a shellfish fisherman. The handwritten history of boatbuilding by Thomas Bates included above, however, references Mayo's operation and the fact that he died by drowning in 1914. Historic maps provide no supportive information; the properties owned by the Mayos were purchased after the 1903 map was published and earlier maps do not note any boat building operations in the area.

The first of two parcels acquired by Steven Watts in 1918 was the Leonard Bolles House (no longer extant) first owned by Capt. Leonard Bolles. Leonard Bolles (1800-1867), the son of Savery Bolles (1775-1826) and his wife Mercy (1778-1854), was first married to Louisa Clifton Hathaway (1807-1830), daughter of Alexander Hathaway (1783-1859) and Mary Westgate (1784-1852). After Mercy's death in 1854 at age 23, he married her younger sister, Eveline Hathaway (1811-1867). The couple had one son, Leonard Anderson Bolles (1840-1915). Census records showed the senior Bolles to be a master mariner, as was also noted on his 1831 marriage registration. The property was conveyed to their son in 1866. Census records from 1860 through 1900 show the younger Bolles, like his father, was a seaman. Again, no biographical records were found linking either of the two Leonard Bolles to boatbuilding, but both father and son were referenced as boat builders in the Thomas Bates handwritten history included above. The second parcel of land acquired by Steven Watts in 1918 was also purchased from Martha S. Mayo; the deed made no mention of buildings. Mayo had acquired it in 1914 from Capt. George D. Allen, who owned a large parcel of marshland on the northwestern shore of the harbor. Watts purchased the remaining portion of Capt. Allen's land in 1944 from Albert C. Cobb.

Steven Jones Watts was born in 1880 in Jonesboro, Maine, which is located in the northern part of the state close to the mouth of the Bay of Fundy. The son of Capt. John Noyes Norton Watts (1858-1925) and Jesse Ann Schoppe (1857-1940), he came from a seafaring family. He was one of the twelve children of Capt. Watts, who according to census records appears to have transitioned from being a master of commercial vessels to captaining yachts and private launches. Steven Watts was married in 1919 in Marion to Eunice Myrtle Gurney (1895-1977), the daughter of Marion grocer Freeman Franklin Gurney (1857-1932) and Anna Fulton Parow (1865-1945). His 1953 obituary notes that he first came to Marion in 1914 to work at the Bigelow boat shop at Monument Beach.⁵ The article states that he operated the boatyard as the S.J. Watts Boat Shop from 1917 until his death. It can reasonably be assumed that Steven Watts' focus was on sport and pleasure craft such as the catboat seen in an early photograph of the yard. (See Figure 10.) Watts was active in the Beverly Yacht Club and served as a starter for races. He also was on the faculty of Tabor Academy as an instructor in carpentry and woodworking. Watts was town harbormaster for a number of years. In 1938 the boatyard was hit by the devastating hurricane of that year. This storm, which landed on the southern shore of New England on September 21, resulted in more than 600 deaths and the destruction of tens of thousands of homes and other buildings with many billions of dollars (in today's dollars) of total damages. In addition to sustaining the effects of high wind and

⁴ "S.J. Watts, 73, Marion Harbor Official, Dies," *The Standard-Times*, New Bedford, MA, June 13, 1953.

⁵ Ibid.

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Area Letter Form Nos.

MRN.Q

See Data Sheet

water, the Watts boatyard caught fire and had to be almost completely rebuilt. (See Figures 8, 9, and 10 for historic images of the Watts Boatyard.

Watts Boatyard Title History

Parcel # 1			
10-05-1918	1311-252	Martha S. Mayo	Steven J. Watts
07-29-1907	974-156	Leonard A. Bolles	Martha S. Mayo
08-28-1866	335-270	Leonard Bolles	Leonard A. Bolles
Parcel #2			
10-05-1918	1311-253	Martha S. Mayo	Steven J. Watts
11-09-1914	1198-483	George D. Allen	Thomas W. Mayo
Parcel #3			
12-21-1944	1898-399	Albert C. Cobb	Stephen J. Watts
12-17-1938	1760-420	Heirs at law of George D. Allen	Albert C. Cobb

Burr Brothers Boats, Inc. (1954-Present)

In 1954 the boatyard was purchased for \$40,300 by John and Carleton Burr of Mattapoisett at a public auction from the estate of Steven J. Watts. (See Figure 11.) At the time the two brothers operated Burr Brothers Boatyard in Mattapoisett. John and Carleton Burr were the sons of Isaac Tucker Burr, Jr. (1885-1972) and Evelyn Thayer (1888-1980). Both their father and grandfather, Isaac Tucker Burr, were Boston investment bankers with Burr, Gannett & Co. John Thayer Burr (1923-2014) and Carleton Burr (1921-2003) graduated from Harvard College and served in the United States Navy during World War II. Both had a passion for boats and sailing. They had started a successful boat yard in nearby Mattapoisett in 1948 and saw this as an opportunity to expand their growing business. Burr Brothers provided repair and storage services for yachts and operated a marine supplies store at both sites; the Mattapoisett facility was sold in the 1960s.

Just days after their purchase of the Watts property in 1954, Hurricane Carol struck the southeast coast of New England. Another devastating tropical storm, it did significant damage to the newly purchased boatyard.

At the same time that they purchased the Watts properties and business, Burr Brothers bought two adjacent parcels to the south from Preston C. and Sarah F. Alley of Marion. The first property is seen on the 1903 map immediately north of Delano’s Wharf with C.H. Delano shown as the owner. Grocery store owner Charles Henry Delano (1834-1922) was the son of Henry D. Delano (1798-1888) and Laura Allen (1803-1886). He and his wife Anna Maria Richmond Delano (1853-1903) left the house to their children, Susan (Susie) Gibbs Delano (b.1886), a music teacher, and Henry W. Delano (1880-1946), also a teacher in the public schools. The dwelling house was completely destroyed during the 1938 hurricane. The now-empty lot was purchased by their next-door neighbors Preston and Sarah F. Alley.

The second parcel purchased by Burr Brothers is shown on the 1903 map with D.B. (David Bean) Hatch (1834-1908) as owner. Hatch had purchased the house and land from the estate of Abigail Mendall in 1895. Born in New Hampshire, David Hatch was a manufacturer of paper boxes and lived in Everett and Saugus before moving to Marion, his reported residence in the 1910 census. He was married to Louisa Maria Lord Atwood (1844-1917). After the death of Louisa Hatch, the property was purchased by Sarah F. Alley in 1920. The house was damaged in the 1938 storm and moved to another location in Marion.

Continued Expansion of the Boatyard

Burr Brothers continued to enlarge the footprint of the boatyard. In 1962 the company purchased a sixth parcel of land with a dwelling house at 309 Front Street (ca. 1850, Pardon Tripp House, MRN.129) from the estate of Melissa F. Corse. This Greek Revival style house was likely built by mariner Pardon Tripp (b.1815) sometime between 1845 and 1855 on

INVENTORY FORM A CONTINUATION SHEET

MARION

OLD LANDING WHARF-
BURR BROTHERS BOATYARDMASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Area Letter Form Nos.

MRN.Q

See Data Sheet

land purchased from Capt. Leonard Bolles. It was later owned by a widow, Sarah Elizabeth Leonard (1830-1922), and then by Melissa Corse (1869-1954). See MHC Building Form B MRN.129.

In 1964 the boatyard purchased the northernmost parcel of the complex at 366 Wareham Street. Two years later the storage/sales building was constructed there.

In 2003 the boatyard purchased 317 Front Street (ca. 1842 Capt. Peleg Blankinship House, MRN.132). Sea Capt. Peleg Blankinship (1809-1891) was the son of George B. Blankinship (1791-1834) and Sarah Handy (1787-1825). The house was inherited by the couple's daughter Minnie (b.1855) who was married to another master mariner, Capt. Alvin Francis Besse (b.1846). The house was held by a number of subsequent owners until its sale in 2003 to Burr Brothers Boats, Inc. It now serves as part of that boatyard complex. See MHC Building Form B MRN.132.

The Burr Brothers Boatyard is still family owned and operated. According to the current owner, work at the yard is focused on repairs to pleasure craft, the majority of which are fiberglass vessels averaging 40 feet in length.

Title History

Parcels # 1-3			
08-10-1954	2363-46	Estate of Steven J. Watts	John T. Burr & Carleton Burr, dba Burr Brothers
Parcels #4 & 5			
08-10-1954	2363-46	Preston C. & Sarah F. Alley	Burr Brothers Boats, Inc.
Parcel # 4			
11-16-1920	1374-238	John M. Gilman	Sarah F. Alley
06-16-1918	1289-1236	Estate of Louisa M. Hatch	John M. Gilman
07-8-1895	693-528	Estate of Abigail Mendall	Louisa M. Hatch
Parcel #5			
08-07-1947	2072-138	Susie G. Delano	Preston C. & Sarah F. Alley
Probate		Charles H. Delano	Susie Delano
04-08-1880	503-16	Henry D. Delano	Charles H. Delano

Veterans Memorial Park

The town of Marion purchased the Delano and Hathaway wharves and surrounding parcels of land in 1911. Since that time the wharves have served the boating public, providing docking slips for boats and kayaks and a launching ramp providing access to Sippican Harbor. Veterans Memorial Park occupies the southernmost portion of the area. Here memorials for veterans of World War II, the Korean War, and the war in Vietnam are located. The large stone memorial to those who served their country during World War I was moved from Front Street near the Town Hall and Library to this park in 1994.

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

Ancestry.com and FamilySearch.org: census records, vital records, city directories
Atlas of Plymouth County, Boston, MA: George H. Walker & Co., 1879.
Atlas of Plymouth County, Boston, MA: L.J. Richards Co., 1903.
 Burr Bros. Boats, Inc. website @ <http://www.burrbros.com/>
 Burr, Tucker. Email and personal communications. November/December 2022.
 Dempsey, Claire C. *Marion Survey Plan*, February 2020.
 Dempsey, Claire C. *Draft Area Form: Main Street, Marion, MRN.AA*, October 2021.
 Hammond, A.B., *Plan of Rochester, surveyed by A.B. Hammond, 1830*, Massachusetts Archives.
 MACRIS: Massachusetts Cultural Resources Information System @ MHC-macris.net

INVENTORY FORM A CONTINUATION SHEET

MARION

OLD LANDING WHARF-
BURR BROTHERS BOATYARDMASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Area Letter

Form Nos.

MRN.Q

See Data Sheet

McMaster, Virginia Savage. *A Field Guide to American Houses*, New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2019.
Map of the Town of Marion, Plymouth County, Massachusetts, H.F. Walling, 1855.
Plymouth County Registry of Deeds
Rosbe, Judith. *Marion*. Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2000.
Rosbe, Judith. *Maritime Marion*, Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2002.
Sippican Historical Society: online database
Smith, Pete, ed. *A Picture Postcard History of Marion, Massachusetts*. New Bedford, MA: Spinner Publications, 2008.
Town of Marion, Massachusetts, Sanborn Map Company, New York, NY, 1921.
Town of Marion, Massachusetts, Sanborn Map Company, New York, NY, 1933.

INVENTORY FORM A CONTINUATION SHEET MARION

OLD LANDING WHARF-
BURR BROTHERS BOATYARD

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Area Letter Form Nos.

MRN.Q See Data Sheet

DATA SHEET

Photograph	Historic Name Style/Form	Address	Parcel #	Year Built	MHC #	Image #
	Burr Brothers Boats Office/Store	305 Front Street	13-8-1	1957	MRN.334	2
	Burr Brothers Boats South Sheds	305 Front Street	13-8-2	1967	MRN.335	3
	Burr Brothers Boats North Shed	305 Front Street	13-8-3	1940	MRN.336	
	Burr Brothers Boats Main & Spar Sheds	305 Front Street	13-8-4	1940	MRN.337	4, 5
	Burr Brothers Boats Northwest Sheds	305 Front Street	13-8-5	1964	MRN.338	6

INVENTORY FORM A CONTINUATION SHEET MARION

OLD LANDING WHARF-
BURR BROTHERS BOATYARD

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Area Letter Form Nos.

MRN.Q

See Data Sheet

Photograph	Historic Name Style/Form	Address	Parcel #	Year Built	MHC #	Image #
	Pardon Tripp House Greek Revival See MHC Building Form B MRN.129	309 Front Street	13-9	ca. 1850	MRN.129	7
	Capt. Peleg Blankinship House Greek Revival See MHC Building Form B MRN.132	317 Front Street	13-7	ca. 1842	MRN.132	8
	Old Landing Wharves and Seawall	Front Street	13-13	18th c.	MRN.921	1
	Veterans Park	Front Street	13-12	20th c.	MRN.936	
	Burr Brothers Boats Storage / Sales Building	366 Wareham Street	12-9	1966	MRN.339	

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Area Letter

Form Nos.

MRN.Q

See Data Sheet

Photographs



Photograph 1. View northwest to Burr Brothers Boatyard from Delano's Wharf. Hathaway's Wharf is seen in the foreground.



Photograph 2. The Office / Store, MRN. 334. West (facade) elevation and south elevations.

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Area Letter

Form Nos.

MRN.Q

See Data Sheet



Photograph 3. South Sheds, MRN.335. West and south elevations.



Photograph 4. Main and Spar Sheds, MRN.337. East elevation facing Sippican Harbor.

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Area Letter

Form Nos.

MRN.Q

See Data Sheet



Photograph 5. Main and Spar Sheds, MRN.337. North and west elevations facing Front Street.



Photograph 6. Northwest Sheds, MRN.338. South elevations.

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Area Letter

Form Nos.

MRN.Q

See Data Sheet



Photograph 7. 309 Front Street, MRN.129. West and south elevations.



Photograph 8. 317 Front Street, MRN.132. North and west elevations.

MRN.Q

See Data Sheet

Figures



Figure 1. Approximate location of Old Wharf and Burr Brothers Boatyard, 2021 Mass Mapper Aerial Imagery.

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Area Letter Form Nos.

MRN.Q

See Data Sheet



Figure 2. Approximate location of Old Wharf and Burr Brothers Boatyard on detail from *Plan of Rochester*, A. B. Hammond, surveyor, 1830.



Figure 3. Approximate location of Old Wharf and Burr Brothers Boatyard on inset of *Map of the Town of Marion*, Old Landing Inset, H.E. Walling 1855.

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Area Letter Form Nos.
MRN.Q See Data Sheet

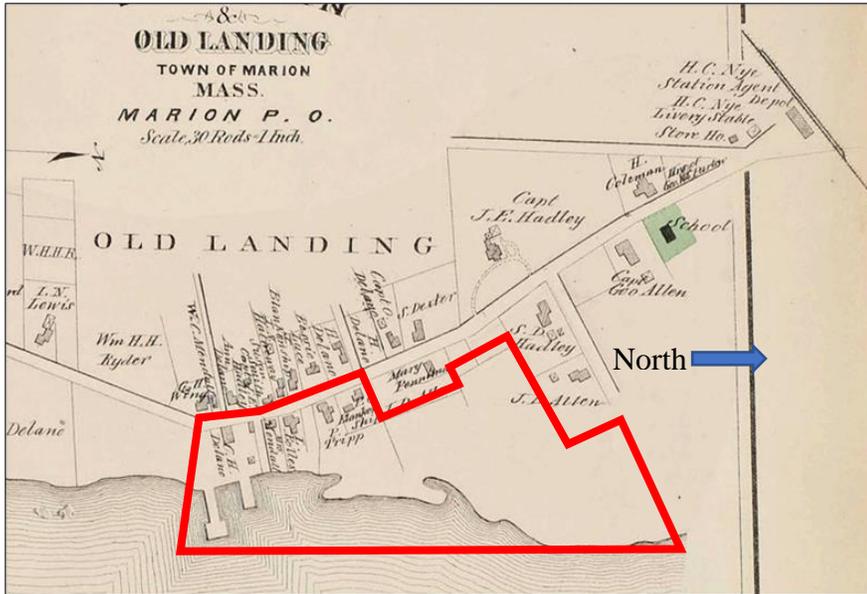


Figure 4. Approximate location of Old Wharf and Burr Brothers Boatyard on detail from Town of Marion, *Atlas of Plymouth County*, Boston, MA: George H. Walker & Co., 1879.

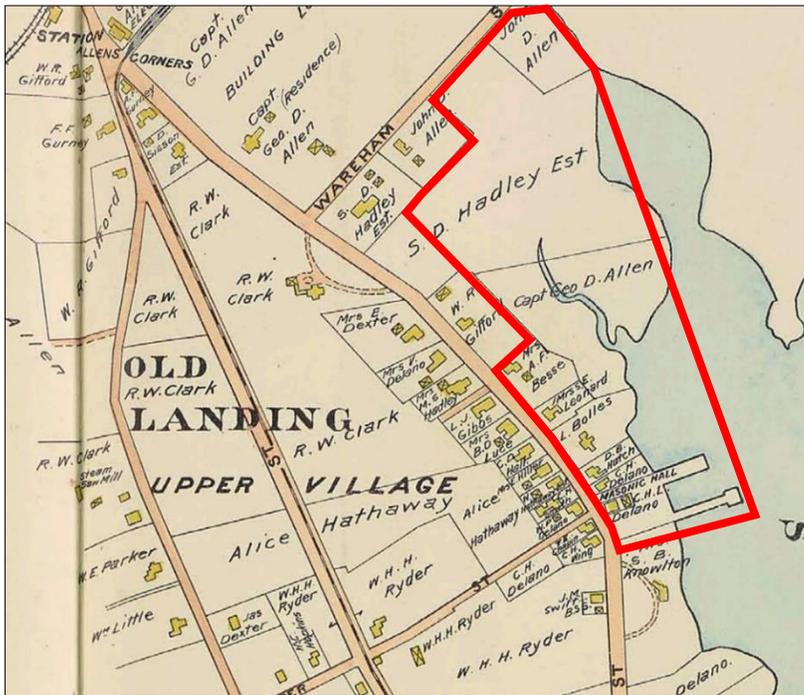


Figure 5. Location of Old Wharf and Burr Brothers Boatyard on detail of *Atlas of Plymouth County*, Boston, MA: L.J. Richards Co., 1903.

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Area Letter Form Nos.

MRN.Q

See Data Sheet

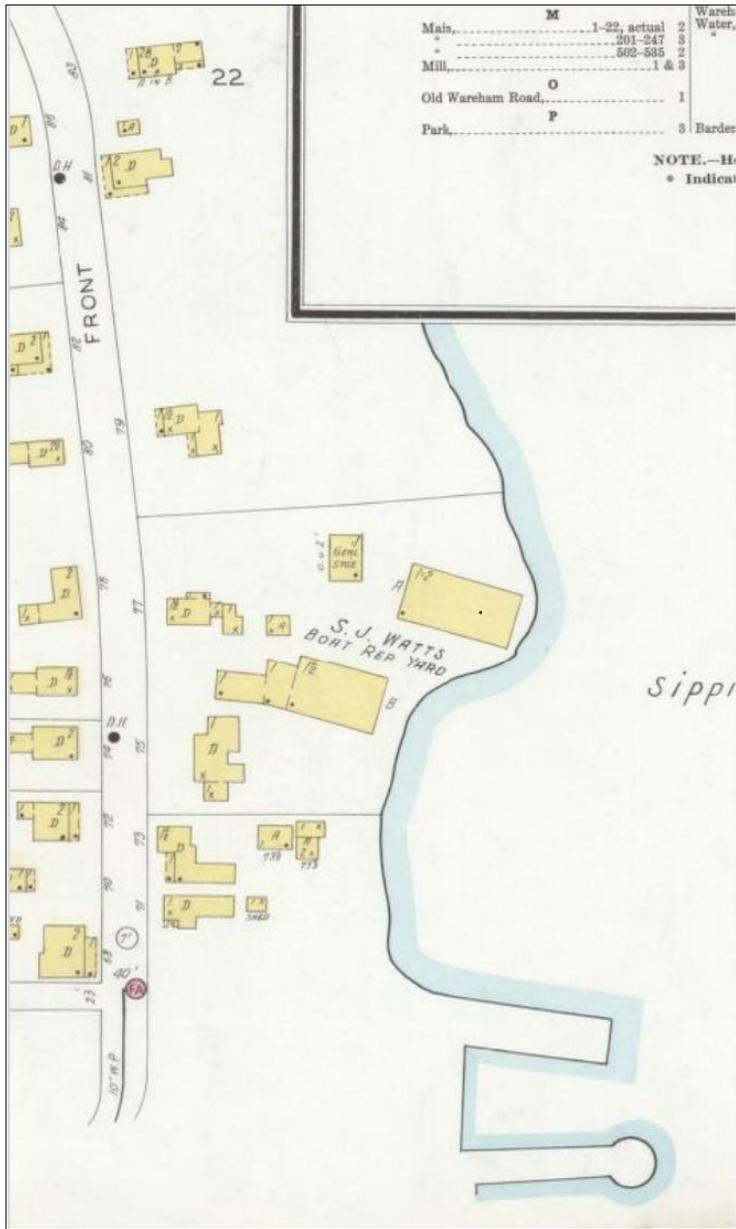


Figure 6. Old Landing Wharves and Watts Boatyard as seen on detail of Sanborn Map Company, New York, NY, 1933.

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Area Letter Form Nos.

MRN.Q

See Data Sheet



Figure 7. Date unknown. Two-masted schooner shown at Old Landing Wharf. Photograph courtesy of Sippican Historical Society.



Figure 8. S.J. Watts Boatyard, ca. 1932. Photograph courtesy of Sippican Historical Society.

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Area Letter Form Nos.

MRN.Q

See Data Sheet



Figure 9. Watts Boatyard, 1937. Photograph courtesy of Sippican Historical Society.

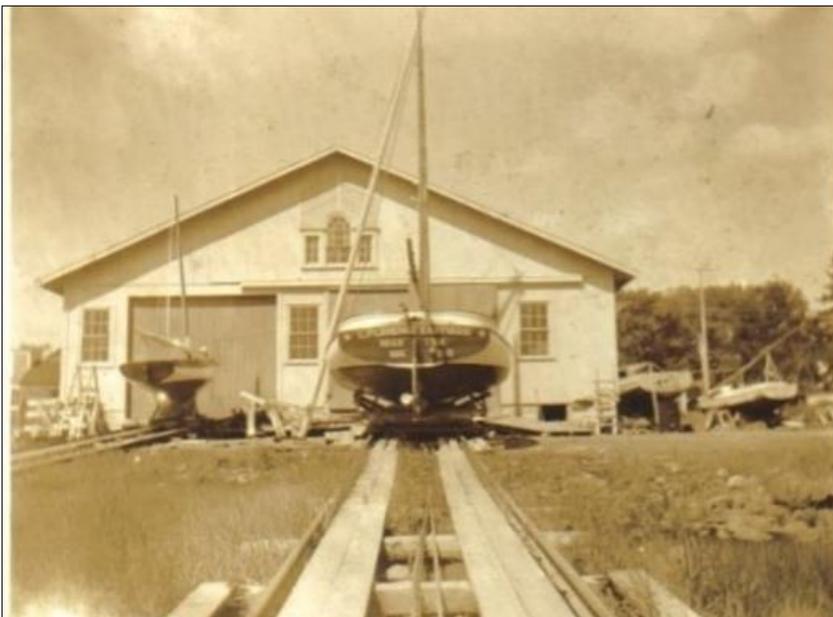


Figure 10. Catboat at Watts Boatyard, 1938. Photograph courtesy of Sippican Historical Society.

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Area Letter Form Nos.

MRN.Q

See Data Sheet

FOR SALE at PUBLIC AUCTION




By order of the Probate Court in Plymouth County, all of the property, real and personal (excepting accounts receivable) of the business known as the Watts Boat Yard on Front Street, Marion, Massachusetts and facing on Marion Harbor. Land about 4.25 acres, of which 3 acres are marsh; combination storage and workshop building (18' x 45'), 3 additional storage buildings (54' x 48', 18' x 27', and 48' x 28'), office and storeroom buildings, lumber shed and gear shed. Pier, gangway and float (under Federal permit); miscellaneous inventory of paint, lumber and oil. Machinery includes a jointer and motor; 18" surface planer and motor; band saw and motor; bench saw and motor; 8" Black & Decker portable power saw; 1/2" electric drill; 1/2" electric drill; Black & Decker grinder; drill press; wood turning lathe; bull winch 5 h. p. gasoline motor; electric hauling winch; moorings, wooden cradles; 4 marine railways; and also includes 4 Herreshoff 12-footer class yachts, a 16-foot work skiff, a wood pontoon work float and a 30-foot power boat. All to be sold as is and where is without any warranties.

Sale on premises at 2:30 P. M., Wednesday, May 25, 1954

TERMS:—No bid in any amount less than \$25,000 to be considered; 10% in cash or certified check, balance to be paid on delivery of deed and bill of sale within 15 days. Other terms and conditions to be announced at sale.

Joseph C. Duggan, Special Master
261 Union Street, New Bedford, Mass., Tel. 3-7691

*Part of the Map from the 1880s
A Copy of the Blueprint
Of the Above Land*

Figure 11. Notice of Public Auction, Uncited newspaper clipping, dated 05/08/1954. Courtesy Sippican Historical Society.

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Area Letter

Form Nos.

MRN.Q

See Data Sheet



Figure 12. Burr Brothers Boatyard with buildings labeled. Google Images.

