

# FORM B – BUILDING

Assessor's Number USGS Quad Area(s) Form Number

14-39

Marion

N, Z

MRN.186

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

**Town/City:** MARION

**Place:** (*neighborhood or village*): Marion Village –  
Cottage Street (MRN.Z)

## Photograph



**Address:** 19 Cottage Street

**Historic Name:** Charles and Polly Gurney House

**Uses:** Present: Single Family Dwelling House

Original: Single Family Dwelling House

**Date of Construction:** ca. 1888-1900

**Source:** Deed research, Census records

**Style/Form:** Victorian Eclectic

**Architect/Builder:** Unknown/ Seth Mendall (possibly)

**Exterior Material:**

Foundation: Fieldstone

Wall/Trim: Wood clapboard

Roof: Asphalt shingles

**Outbuildings/Secondary Structures:**

Two-car garage

**Major Alterations** (*with dates*):\*

Window replacements (dates unknown)

\*Based on Property Card and/or observation

**Condition:** Good

**Moved:** no  yes  **Date:**

**Acreage:** 0.35 acres

**Setting:** This building is located on the north side of Cottage Street. The street is lined with late-19<sup>th</sup> and early-20<sup>th</sup> century houses. Most of the houses, including this one, are set fairly close to the street on small lots. A brick track driveway runs along the west side of this house to a garage in the rear. The front of the house is landscaped with foundation plantings, and a brick walkway leads to the front entrance.

## Locus Map



Aerial Imagery, 2021

**Recorded by:** Eric Dray, Preservation Consultant

**Organization:** Sippican Historical Society

**Date** (*month / year*): February 2023

# INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

MARION

19 COTTAGE STREET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Area(s) Form No.

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Recommended for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

*If checked, you must attach a completed National Register Criteria Statement form.*

*Use as much space as necessary to complete the following entries, allowing text to flow onto additional continuation sheets.*

## ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION:

*Describe architectural features. Evaluate the characteristics of this building in terms of other buildings within the community.*

This house, built in ca. 1888-1900, can be characterized as Victorian Eclectic in style, meaning it was built during the Victorian era but does not display sufficient features of any one style. This house is somewhat similar in form and design to its neighbor, 21 Cottage Street (MRN.187). The form of both houses consists of a two-story, gable-front main block that is three bays wide, with a shallow, stepped-down lateral ell at the rear of the right (east) elevation. This house also has a shallow one-story ell on the left (west) elevation. The building rests on a mortared fieldstone foundation. The elevations are clad in wood clapboard with plain cornerboards. The roof is clad in asphalt shingles (likely wood shingles originally), and has a projecting molded box cornice with partial returns across the gable ends.

What may have begun as an open porch across the front elevation is now fully enclosed. Like its neighbor, an open porch spans the right (east) side elevation back to the lateral ell. This porch has square posts with decorative brackets. Windows have all been replaced with 1/1 double-hung sash set in surrounds with molded lintels. The original muntin pattern was likely 2/2 or 2/1.

A comparison of the Assessor sketch (Figure 1) with the footprint on the 1908 Sanborn Insurance Map (Figure 2) shows that the front porch was enclosed by 1908, or perhaps was never an open porch.

## HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

*Discuss the history of the building. Explain its associations with local (or state) history. Include uses of the building, and the role(s) the owners/occupants played within the community.*

Cottage Street began as a path before the land was subdivided and built out with houses at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Cottage Street was the last of the major Marion Village streets to be developed. As noted in the Cottage Street Area Form (MRN.Z), during the first half of the 19th century, most of the land bordering Cottage Street was part of Capt. Henry Allen's salt works. The completion of the Public Library in 1872 and Tabor Academy in 1876 were likely an impetus for the eventual development of land in the location of Cottage Street. By the mid-1880s, parcels were being sold along a "contemplated" or "proposed" street, and by the 1890s, deeds began referring to Cottage Street by name. Cottage Street was laid out wider than earlier side streets in Marion Village and the house lots were larger.

In 1887, Seth Mendall (Mendell) of Marion sold this parcel, with no reference to buildings, to Charles H. Gurney, also of Marion.<sup>1</sup> The deed described this parcel as being on the "proposed street." Mendall also sold the neighboring parcel on which 21 Cottage Street (MRN.187) would be built. This house and 21 Cottage Street may have both been built by Seth Mendall, who was listed as a carpenter or ship carpenter in census records and directories. He also appears to have built the much larger house at 27 Cottage Street (MRN.189) in ca. 1887.

The exact date this house was built is unknown, but Gurney is shown living in this location in the 1900 US Census, where he was listed as a day laborer. This would mean the house was built sometime between ca. 1888 and 1900. The house is shown on the 1903 Plymouth County Atlas with the name C. H. Gurney (Figure 3). In 1892, Charles Gurney's sister and brother-in-law, Frank and Elva Sherman, bought the property next store and built 21 Cottage Street.

Wareham-born Charles H. Gurney (b. 1855) married Polly Blankenship (1855-1930) in Marion in 1877. They had three children, and Charles Gurney was listed as a boatman in the 1910 US Census and the 1928 Street Directory, and was listed without

<sup>1</sup> Plymouth County Registry of Deeds, Book 4174/ Page 619.

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occupation in the 1930 Census. He took out a series of mortgages with the Wareham Savings Bank and lost the house to foreclosure in 1933 (perhaps a victim of the Great Depression).

In 1939, the Home Owners' Loan Corporation sold this property to Frank and Annette Cortwright of Marion.<sup>2</sup> No information has been located to date about the Cortwrights. In 1947, they sold the house to Phillips A. and Florence W. Noyes of Marion.<sup>3</sup> Phillips A. Noyes, class of '43 at Tabor, worked there as a teacher. The house was sold in 1980 following Florence Noyes' death.<sup>4</sup>

## BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

Maps and atlases:

1903, *Atlas of Surveys of Plymouth County*. Springfield, MA: L. J. Richards Co.

1933, *Sanborn Fire Insurance Map from Marion, Plymouth County, Massachusetts*. New York: Sanborn Map Company.

Ancestry.com – vital records.

Dempsey and Clemson. MHC Area Form Z, Cottage-School Streets, 2021.

Dunham, Charles H. *Dunham's Wareham, Mattapoissett, Marion and Rochester Massachusetts Directory 1928-1929*. Winthrop: Charles H. Dunham, 1928.

Gordon, Edward. MHC Area Form N, Wharf Village, 1998.

Plymouth County Registry of Deeds



Photo 2. View from Cottage Street, looking northwest.

<sup>2</sup> PCRD, Book 1775/ Page 27.

<sup>3</sup> PCRD, Book 1951/ Page 277.

<sup>4</sup> PCRD, Book 4882/ Page 288.



National Register of Historic Places Criteria Statement Form

Check all that apply:

- Individually eligible Eligible only in a historic district
Contributing to a potential historic district Potential historic district

Criteria: A B C D

Criteria Considerations: A B C D E F G

Statement of Significance by Eric Dray, Preservation Consultant for Sippican Historical Society
The criteria that are checked in the above sections must be justified here.

This property is a contributing resource in the combined Areas of Wharf Village-Sippican Village (MRN.N) and Water Street (MRN.L), hereinafter referred to as Marion Village.\*

Marion Village is recommended as eligible for listing at the local level under Criterion A in the area of Maritime History. Marion Village contains the great majority of buildings connected to Marion's historical maritime development beginning in the late-18th century. With the rise of saltmaking, shipyards, and whaling, maritime activity increased dramatically into the mid-19th century, as did residential development in Marion Village. In addition to the houses built by those in the maritime industry, Marion Village contains numerous buildings and structures associated with maritime industrial activity, including a chandlery, sail loft, cooperage, and wharves. As Marion Village's prosperity became linked to Sippican Harbor, Marion Village also became the commercial, political and institutional center of the town.

Marion Village is also recommended as eligible for listing at the local level under Criterion A in the area of Entertainment/ Recreation. Starting in the mid-19th century, maritime activity declined significantly. The decline in maritime activity was eventually replaced by the rise in the 1870s of a summer colony as Marion Village emerged as an elite summer resort. This was facilitated by the arrival of train service in the 1854. Summer visitors, including artists and writers, were drawn Sippican Harbor's beauty and tranquility. A large hotel, the Sippican Hotel, was located at the corner of South and Water Streets, and a few houses were converted to inns. While the hotel was town down in 1929, a large livery complex built by the Hiller Brothers at 147 Front Street (MRN.216) is extant. They provided horse-drawn vehicles to summer visitors registered at the Sippican Hotel, and ferried guests back and forth between the hotel and the train depot. In Marion Village, ownership (or occupancy through rental) of many houses began to shift from local maritime families to seasonal residents, including nationally-noteworthy politicians, businessmen, artists and writers. During this period, Marion Village also saw the addition of high style, architect-designed summer cottages and recreation resources.

Marion Village is recommended as eligible for listing at the local level under Criterion C in the area of Architecture. Marion Village is a remarkably intact historic town center, including a compact collection of historic dwellings, along with a few churches, schools, commercial buildings and recreation buildings. Marion Village contains a great concentration of Federal and Greek Revival houses; and examples of later Victorian-era styles, including high-style examples of summer house architecture along Sippican Harbor and large institutional buildings not found elsewhere in Marion.

The great majority of resources in Marion Village retain substantial integrity of location, setting, materials, workmanship, design, feeling, and association.

\*The potential Marion Village district boundaries include surveyed areas within the boundary of MRN.N completed in 2020-2022 for Barden-Hiller (MRN.Y), Cottage Street (MRN.Z), Main Street (MRN.AA), South Street (MRN.AB), Upper Pleasant Street (MRN.AC), and Upper Main Street (MRN.AH).