

# FORM B – BUILDING

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

14-78

Marion

N, Y

MRN.396

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

**Town/City:** MARION

**Place:** (*neighborhood or village*): Marion Village -  
Barden-Hiller (MRN.Y)

## Photograph



**Address:** 159 Front Street

**Historic Name:** Sarah E. E. Perine House

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

Original: Single Family Dwelling House

**Date of Construction:** [1883-1890]

**Source:** Deed research

**Style/Form:** No Style

**Architect/Builder:** Unknown

**Exterior Material:**

Foundation: Unknown

Wall/Trim: Wood shingles/ Wood

Roof: Asphalt shingles

**Outbuildings/Secondary Structures:**

Garden shed

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

Rehabilitation (2006)

\*Based on Property Card and/or observation

**Condition:** Good

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

**Acreage:** 0.23 acres

**Setting:** This deep, level parcel is located on the east side of Front Street in the heart of Marion Village. The surrounding area includes a mix of residential, commercial, industrial and institutional resources, including Barden's Boat Yard (MRN.O) which abuts the property to the east. This building is set back slightly from the street. The front yard is landscaped with lawn, a brick walkway and foundation plantings. A gravel driveway leads along the north side of the house to a parking area behind the house.

## 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

159 FRONT 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.*

The main body of this house is similar in form to its neighbor, 157 Front Street (MRN.204) – both are late-19<sup>th</sup> century, 2½-story, gable-front houses that are three bays wide, and both have a rear ell, and a small one-story bay on the left (north) side elevation.. The gable-front house form is fairly common in Marion Village for 19<sup>th</sup> century houses. In addition to the main block, this house has a two-story ell with hipped roof extending from the back of the right (south) side elevation. This rear ell may be the ell shown in the 1903 Plymouth County Atlas, but it is drawn smaller and less connected to the main block (Figure 3). The footprint on the 1908 and 1921 Sanborn Fire Insurance maps (Figures, 4, 5), does appear to show this ell in full. The one-story addition in front of that ell may have begun as an open porch, added sometime after 1933, that was later enclosed. The small, one-story bay on the left (north) side elevation is not shown on the 1908 Sanborn map but does appear on the 1921 Sanborn map.

The building's foundation is not visible, but almost all 19<sup>th</sup> century houses in Marion Village rest on fieldstone and/or granite foundations. The elevations are clad in wood clapboard with plain cornerboards. The roof is clad in asphalt shingles (likely wood shingles originally), and the roof has a narrow, projecting box cornice which terminates in a straight edge, i.e. there are no partial returns across the gable ends commonly found in earlier Greek Revival-style houses.

Fenestration consists primarily of modern, replacement 6/1 double-hung sash set in frames with molded lintels. The front door is protected by a simple shed-roofed enclosure supported by turned posts. An enclosure of that size and location is not shown on the 1908 Sanborn map, but is shown on the 1921 Sanborn map. It is unknown, however, if the current door enclosure dates to that time.

## 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.*

While there had been some economic activity and residential development in Sippican Village prior to the Revolution, residential development accelerated in the early-1800s, as happened in many coastal Massachusetts towns, with boat building, whaling, coastal schooner trade, and the salt industry driving the economy. The construction of the First Congregational Meeting House in 1799, now Marion General Store (140 Front Street, MRN.22), also helped make Sippican Village the center for spiritual and civic life.<sup>1</sup> Residential (and limited commercial) development was initially concentrated along the Front Street/Main Street axis, and the harbor became the site for maritime-related utilitarian buildings and wharfs. By the time the 1855 Walling Map was prepared, additional streets had been laid out, but Main Street from the harbor west to Pleasant Street was the most densely developed street in the village.

Located just north of the primary village intersection at the corner of Front and Main Streets, this area was first developed with a handful of dwellings along Front Street, and increased in density and functional complexity over time. Behind the dwellings to the east, land was developed largely for industrial and maritime-industrial uses. The commercial zone on Front expanded with the construction of purpose-built stores and the conversion of residences after the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

In 1883, the estate of Charlotte M. Barden (1812-1882) sold at auction a two-acre parcel that included this land to Sarah E. E. Perine.<sup>2</sup> The parcel stretched north to what is now Island Wharf Road (Figure 2). Sarah Perine (1830-1911) was born in New York,

<sup>1</sup> Marion was first settled in 1679 as Sippican, a district of Rochester, and was not incorporated as a separate town until 1852. The name Sippican Village continues to be used interchangeably with Marion Village.

<sup>2</sup> Plymouth County Registry of Deeds, Book 498/ Page 6.



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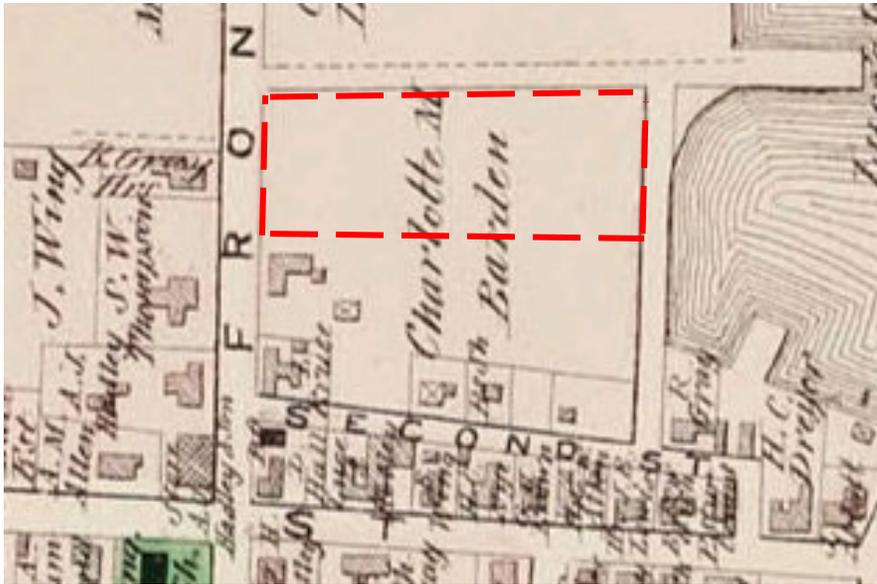


Figure 2. Detail of 1879 Plymouth County Atlas, approx. boundary of Perine parcel added.

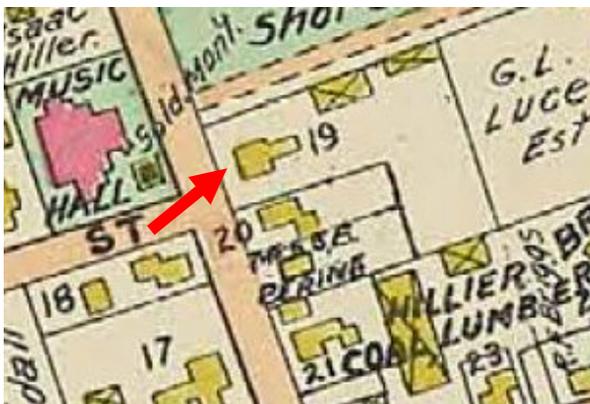


Figure 3. Detail of 1903 Plymouth County Atlas (arrow added).

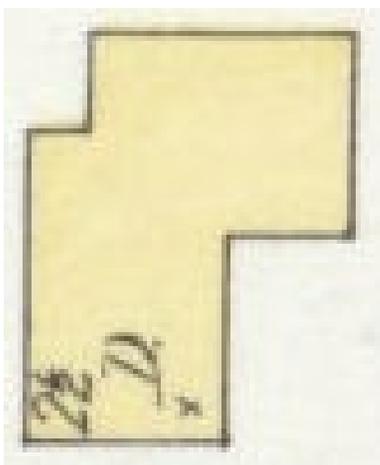


Figure 4. Detail, 1908 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map.

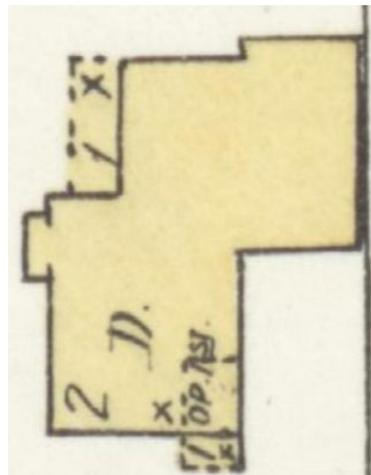


Figure 5. Detail, 1921 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map

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## 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-18<sup>th</sup> century. With the rise of saltmaking, shipyards, and whaling, maritime activity increased dramatically into the mid-19<sup>th</sup> 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-19<sup>th</sup> 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).