

FORM B – BUILDING

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

14-77 Marion N MRN.206

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

Town/City: MARION

Place: (*neighborhood or village*): Marion Village -

Photograph



Address: 163 Front Street

Historic Name: Henry and Eunice Luce House

Uses: Present: Office

Original: Single Family Dwelling House

Date of Construction: [1883-1893]

Source: Deed and mortgage records

Style/Form: Queen Anne

Architect/Builder: Unknown

Exterior Material:

Foundation: Granite, fieldstone

Wall/Trim: Synthetic siding

Roof: Asphalt shingles

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures:

None

Major Alterations (*with dates*)*:

Synthetic clapboard siding, some replacement windows
(dates unknown)

*Based on Property Card and/or observation

Condition: Good

Moved: no yes **Date:**

Acreage: 0.35 acres

Setting: This small, level parcel is located on the east side of Front Street in the heart of Marion Village. It is bordered on the north by Island Wharf Road and the large town green. The surrounding area includes a mix of residential, commercial, institutional and industrial resources, including Barden's Boat Yard (MRN.O) which abuts this property to the east. The former house is set slightly back from the street. The building is surrounded by lawn, mature trees, some foundation plantings, and a low stone wall along Island Wharf Road. A large asphalt parking area east of the building is accessed from Island Wharf Road.

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

163 FRONT STREET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Area(s) Form No.

N

MRN.206

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 is one of the larger houses along Front Street in Marion Village, and a good example of the Queen Anne style. The Queen Anne style broke from the formality of earlier, more classical styles and employed different roof forms including corner turrets, and different siding materials, to enliven a building. It was a style popular from ca. 1880-1910.

In this case, the form of the house consists of a 2½-story main block that has a tall hipped roof. This block has a hexagonal two-story bay (evocative of a corner turret), prominent gable wall dormers on three sides of the hipped roof, and a porch that wraps around the front and part of the left (north) elevations. This porch has a prominent gable dormer aligned with the front entrance. The porch roof is supported by chamfered and bracketed porch posts and enclosed by an unusual balustrade. Behind the main block is a stepped-down, two-story rear ell, also with hipped roof. There is a hexagonal bay on the north elevation of this ell. The 1933 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map (Figure 2) shows the footprint of the house with the square main block and an additional narrow rear ell. That rear ell has since been expanded.

The building rests, like most 19th century houses in the village, on a fieldstone and granite foundation. The elevations are now clad in synthetic clapboard siding. As a Queen Anne-style house, this house originally likely had a mix of wood clapboards and shingles, including patterned shingles. The only hint at the original variation to the house's surfaces are the flared courses between the first and second story. Some of the original siding may still be in place beneath.

The roof is clad in asphalt shingles (likely wood shingles originally). There is a tall, narrow brick chimney rising from the north roof slope of the main block. The roof has a deeply-projecting box cornice. Fenestration includes wood 2/2 windows and replacement 1/1 windows. A few of the harbor-facing windows have been replaced with larger fixed sash. The front entrance consists of paired doors (that may be early or original) set in a simple surround.

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.¹ 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 20th century.

¹ 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.

INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

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Area(s) Form No.

N	MRN.206
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Photo 2. View from Front Street, looking northeast.



Photo 3. View from Island Wharf Road, looking southwest.

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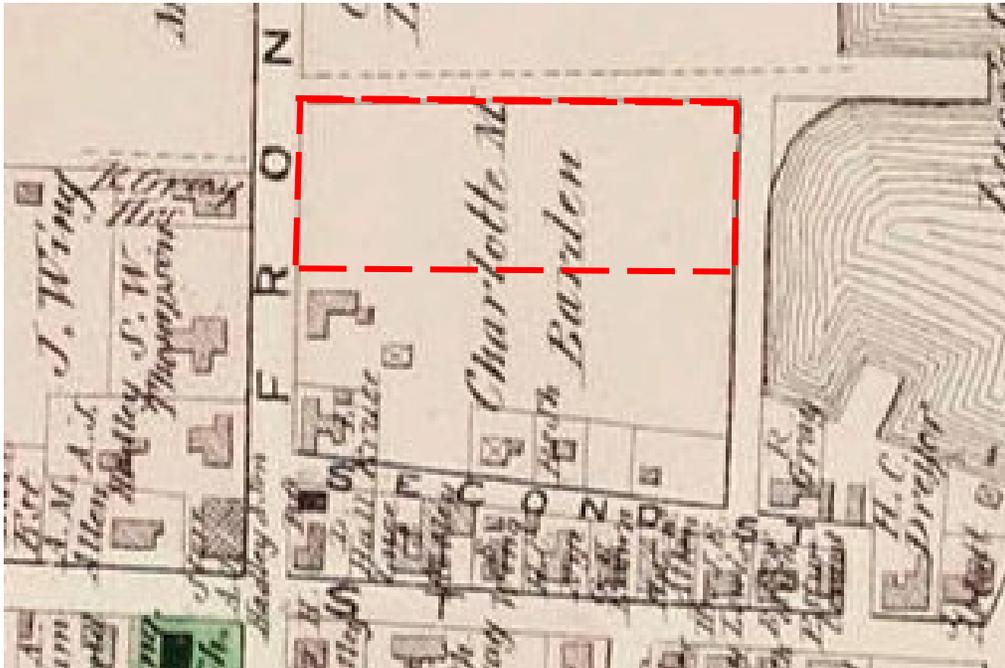


Figure 3. Detail of 1879 Plymouth County Atlas, approx. boundary of Perine parcel added.

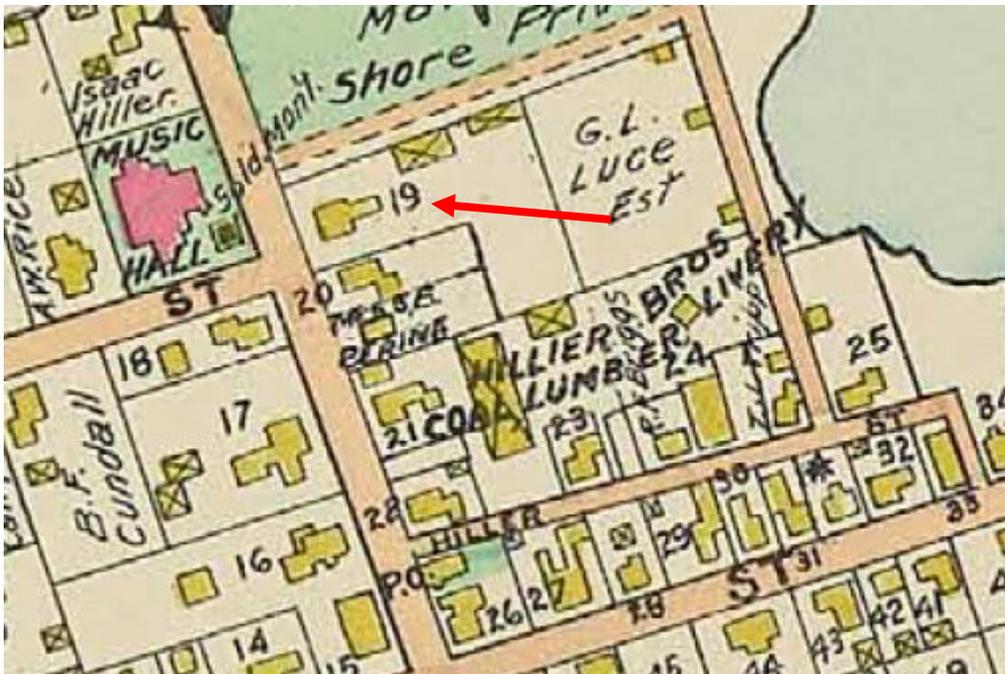


Figure 4. Detail of 1903 Plymouth County Atlas (arrow added).

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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-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).