

FORM B – BUILDING

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

14-35

Marion

N

MRN.209

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

Town/City: MARION

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

Address: 182 Front Street

Historic Name: George A. and Eunice Luce House

Uses: Present: Single Family Dwelling House

Original: Single Family Dwelling House

Date of Construction: [1833-1844]

Source: Deed research

Style/Form: Greek Revival/ Full Cape

Architect/Builder: Unknown

Exterior Material:

Foundation: Brick

Wall/Trim: Wood shingles/ Wood

Roof: Asphalt shingles

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures:

None

Major Alterations (*with dates*)*:

Dormer (2012)

*Based on Property Card and/or observation

Condition: Good

Moved: no yes **Date:**

Acreage: 0.34 acres

Setting: This rectangular parcel is located on the west side of Front Street in a less developed residential stretch between the heart of Marion Village to the south and the Tabor Academy campus to the north. This house is set back slightly from the street on a slight rise that is secured by a low stone retaining wall. A brick walkway leads to the front entrance. A gravel driveway leads to an attached one-car garage at the rear of the house.

Photograph



Locus Map



Recorded by: Eric Dray, Preservation Consultant

Organization: Sippican Historical Society

Date (*month / year*): February 2023

INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

MARION

182 MAIN STREET

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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 is the more modest of two Full Capes facing each other at the north end of Marion Village (then known as Sippican Lower Village). It has the 1½-story, side-gable form, five bays wide with a centered entrance, typical of the Full Cape form. As noted below, this house has an Assessor date of 1780, but was more likely built in ca. 1833-1844, during the period that Greek Revival was the popular style. The house rests on a raised brick foundation (unusual for Marion Village, most are granite and/or fieldstone). The elevations are clad in wood shingles with plain cornerboards. The roof is clad in asphalt shingles (likely wood shingles originally), and a substantial brick chimney rises from the center of the roof ridge. The house has received a series of additions. As can be seen on the 1933 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map (Figure 4), the house then had a deep, one-story rear ell. Since that time, an addition was built off the south side of that ell including a one-bay garage, and an open porch was built in front of that addition connecting to the main house.

Fenestration includes modern, replacement, 6/9 double-hung windows set in surrounds with flared lintels that do not abut the roof cornice like they do across the street at the late-1790s house at 183 Front Street. This is an indication of a higher stud wall (to create more attic level height), and may be an indication that this house was built in the mid-19th century. The front entrance is located within a small enclosed entry porch with a flat roof. While this entrance porch is a later addition (it is not shown on the 1933 Sanborn map), its design, including the transom lights above the door, is consistent with earlier door surrounds.

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. There was also some development along Front Street, including this house (Figure 2).

According to the 1998 Area Form for Marion Village (MRN.N), this house was built in 1790 and was owned in the mid-19th century by ship carpenter William Clark. However, that Area Form is actually referring to a house shown on maps just to the north of this house that is no longer extant.

Title research traces ownership of this house back to Capt. George A. Luce (1782-1855). Many of the Luces who built or owned houses in the 19th century in Marion can trace their lineage back to Tisbury-born Rowland Luce. Maj. Rowland Luce (1756-1835) married Elizabeth Clark (1762-1833) in Marion in 1778, and they went on to have ten children. In 1779, Elizabeth's mother, Thankful Clark (1734-1812), sold Rowland Luce over 35 acres of land for 2,000 pounds, including 5 acres in Marion Village that may have included this land.² Rowland and Elizabeth Luce and their descendants would go on to have a great impact on the development of the village.

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.

² Plymouth County Registry of Deeds, Book 60/ Page 80.

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George Luce was one of their sons. He married Eunice Gould (1783-1839) in 1803, and they had seven children. In 1833, he purchased land that may be this parcel from both his father, Rowland Luce, and Barnabas Holmes.³ The house was in place by 1844 when he sold this property. While this house has an Assessor date of 1780, it is more likely to have been built between 1833 (when he bought his land) and 1844. Between 1844 and 1850, the house was sold by and between their children, ending in 1850 with ownership by John G. Luce.⁴

This house is shown on the 1855 Walling Map and 1879 Plymouth County Atlas with his name (Figures 2, 3). John Gould Luce (1809-1888) was listed in census records as a sailor in water transportation, and then mariner. He married Nancy Hammond (1819-1867) in 1849. As can be seen on the 1855 Walling Map, members of the Luce family also owned other houses nearby.

The house was next owned by Andrew J. Hadley (1820-1897). He owned the general store in the former Congregational Meeting House at 140 Front Street beginning in 1856. His estate sold this house in 1902 to Charles E. Hellier.⁵ Given that the 1998 Area Form incorrectly identified this house as the William Clark house, it might also be incorrect in saying that this house was rented by President and Mrs. Grover Cleveland from Charles E. Hillier in 1888, during their second summer in Marion, and his first term as president. The Grovers may have indeed rented this house at that time, but Hellier did not own the house yet.

The Helliers also bought the house across the street, 183 Front Street (MRN.210) in 1897. Charles Edward Hellier (1865-1940) was born in Maine, and married Mary Harmon (1864-1937) in 1886. He attended Yale as an undergraduate, and received his law degree from Boston University, after which he had a career as a lawyer based in Boston. This house remained in the Hellier family until the late 1970s.

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

Maps and Atlases:

1855, Walling, H. F. *Map of the Town of Marion, Plymouth County, Massachusetts.*

1879, *Atlas of Plymouth County, Massachusetts.* Boston: Geo. H Walker & Co.

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

Ancestry.com – Vital records.

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

Plymouth County Registry of Deeds

Sippican Historical Society Collections.

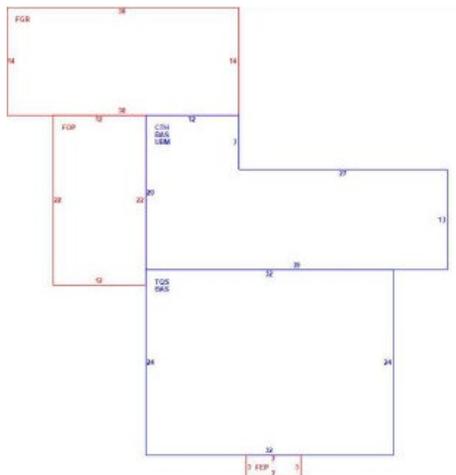


Figure 1. Marion Assessor Sketch.



Photo 2. View from Front Street, looking northwest.

³ PCRD, Book 179/ Page 72, 73.

⁴ PCRD, 238/ Page 220.

⁵ PCRD, Book 853/ Page 21, 23.

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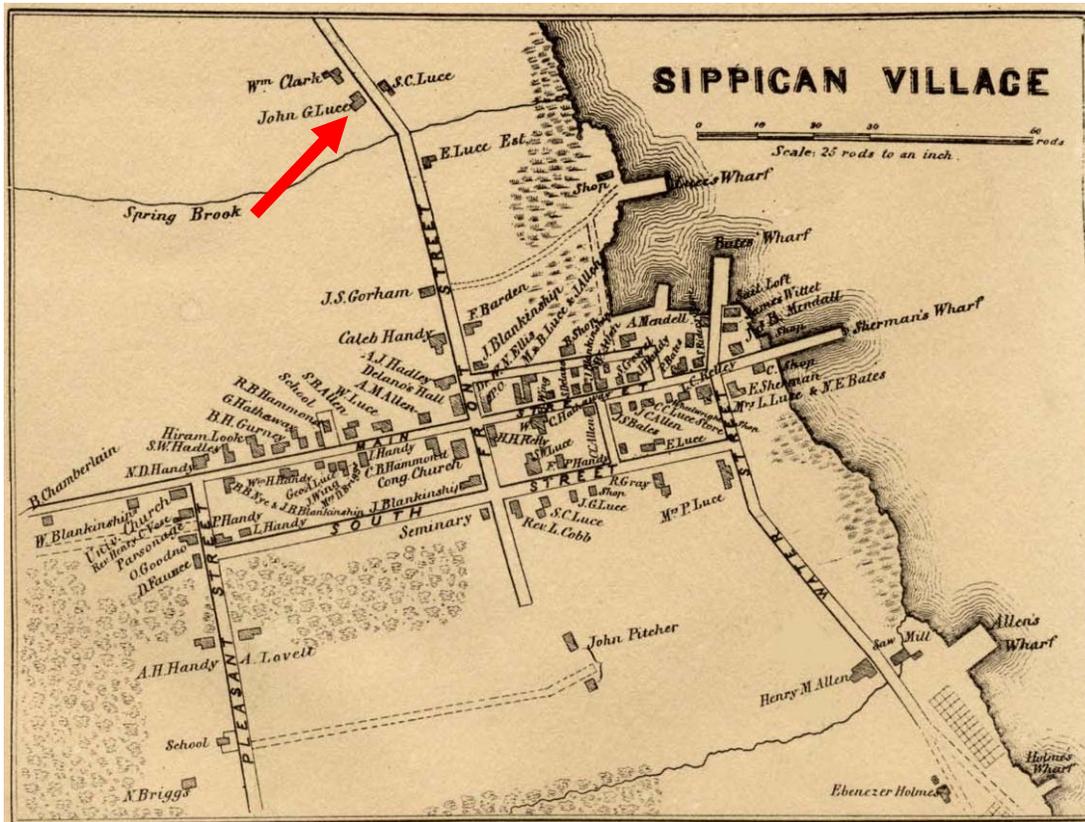


Figure 2. 1855 Walling Map of Marion, Sippican Village Inset Map (arrow added)

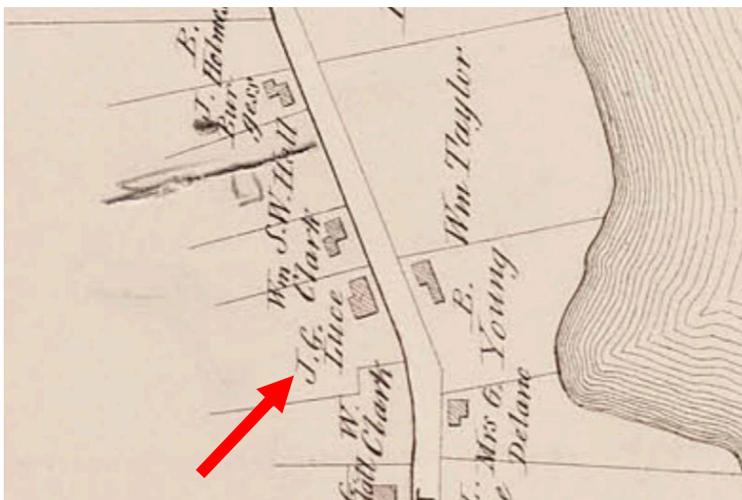


Figure 3. Detail of 1879 Plymouth County Atlas (arrow added).

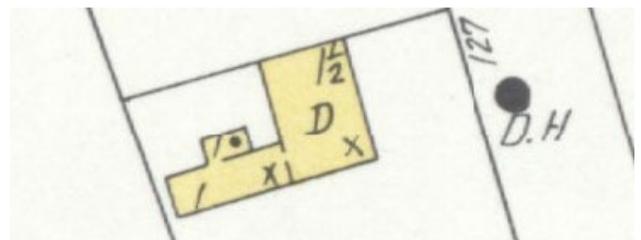


Figure 4. Detail of 1933 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map.

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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-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).