

FORM B – BUILDING

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

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

14 88	Marion	N, AA	MRN.221
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Town/City: MARION

Place: (*neighborhood or village*): Marion Village -
Main Street (MRN.AA)

Photograph



Address: 3 Main Street

Historic Name: Elisha Luce Store

Uses: Present: Single Family Dwelling House

Original: Commercial

Date of Construction: [1820-1836], poss. 1806

Source: Deed research, *Three Centuries of Marion Houses*, Sippican Historical Society, "Wharf Village Walking Tour," Somer's 1820 Diagram

Style/Form: Federal

Architect/Builder: Unknown

Exterior Material:

Foundation: Granite, fieldstone

Wall/Trim: Wood shingles/ Wood

Roof: Asphalt shingles

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures:

None

Major Alterations (*with dates*)*:

Replacement windows (21st c.)

*Based on Property Card and/or observation

Condition: Good

Moved: no yes **Date:**

Acreage: 0.15 acres

Setting: The surrounding area includes historic houses sited close to the street and each other along Main Street, and the Beverly Yacht Club and larger parcels with houses set farther back along Water Street to the south. In general, the houses on the north side of Main Street are set closer to the street than those on the south side, including this one. The narrow front yard of this property has a small planting bed along the sidewalk.

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

3 MAIN STREET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

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Area(s) Form No.

N, AA

MRN.221

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 four examples on this block of Main Street of a Federal-style, 2½-story, side-gable house form with a symmetrical five-bay front elevation. A more elaborate example is found across the street (2 Main Street, MRN.220). This house rests, like most 19th century houses in Marion Village, on a fieldstone and rough-cut granite foundation. The elevations are clad in wood shingles with plain cornerboards. The roof is clad in asphalt shingles (wood shingles originally), and has a projecting molded box cornice with partial returns across the gable ends. There is a large shed dormer on the rear roof slope topped with a widow's walk. A brick chimney rises off-center from the main block. Two single-window gable dormers are located on the front roof slope – these dormers replaced earlier hip-roofed dormers that were themselves later additions (see Photo 4).

The Federal style, popular from ca. 1780-1820, represented the first architecture of the new republic. Like the Colonial-era Georgian style, it used classical forms but in a refined and simplified manner. The most character-defining feature of the Federal style for this house, in addition to the overall form, is the front entrance with its surround. Modest but elegant in design, the surround consists of broad boards (not pilasters) and a five-light transom. The early view, cited above, also shows that a shallow entrance porch shielded the front door at that time. Fenestration includes of modern, replacement 12/12 windows on the first floor and 8/12 windows on second story. Those on the front elevation abut the roof cornice, indicating a shorter wall plate.

The overall house form includes an offset ell that extends from the right (east) side of the rear elevation (Photo 3). The front portion is one story and rises to 1½ stories. The house is shown with a footprint showing a rear ell as early as the 1879 Plymouth County Atlas (Figure 6). The ell in its current configuration appears to be shown on the 1908 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map (Figure 2).

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 (Figure 4).

There are gaps in the understanding of this house's origins. According to Olive Hiller Somers' *Three Centuries of Marion Houses*, and the Sippican Historical Society's Wharf Village Walking Tour, this property was first the site of the 1760 J. C. Luce House. According to those sources, this house/store was built in 1806. However, unless it was moved to its current location, there is no house here on the diagram prepared by Olive Hiller Somers for ownership as of 1820 (Figure 3).

Title research goes back to an 1836 deed where Elisha Luce was sold shares in a property owned jointly with the heirs of Edward Hammond, Jr. That deed describes the property as being on the corner of the road leading to the old wharf and Main Street, and states that this property, "is the same on which a store is erected owned by Elisha Luce."² If the 1820 Somer's diagram is accurate, then perhaps Elisha Luce built this former store sometime after 1820 and before 1836.

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 187/ Page 240.

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Capt. Elisha Luce (1786-1850) lived across the street at 2 Main Street (MRN.220). He was a son of Maj. Rowland and Elizabeth Luce. 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.³ Rowland and Elizabeth Luce and their descendants would go on to have a great impact on the development of the village.

Deed research going back becomes less clear, but it seems safe to assume that this land was part of Rowland Luce's holdings, and that his son built a store, perhaps this building, sometime after 1820 (again unless this house was moved here and it does predate 1820).

The building had a number of tenants. This building is shown on the 1855 Walling Map of Marion with the name "S. Rider's Store" (Figure 5). This refers to Sumner Ryder - he is listed as Clerk, Store Clerk and Trader in census records. The building had also been the home of A. J. Hadley's Store which outfitted ships for voyages (ship chandlery). The store occupied the right (eastern) half of the first floor, and the west side housed Marion's first post office in Sippican Village. The Hadley family later operated a general store in the old Congregational meeting house at 140 Front Street beginning in 1856. Clothing was purportedly prepared on the second floor of this house, and sailmaking took place on the third floor in the 19th century.

After Elisha Luce's death, this property was owned by his younger brother, mariner Stephen C. Luce (1796-1874). In 1865, Luce sold what was then referred to as the "store house" to Moses Swift of Middleboro.⁴ The property is again described as bounded on the south by Main Street and on the east by the road "leading to the old wharf."

The building is shown on the 1879 Plymouth County Atlas with the name "Abbott" (Figure 6). The year prior, Moses W. Swift, "gentleman" still of Middleboro, sold this property to Joseph W. Abbott "merchant" of Boston.⁵ Abbott was living in NY, NY in 1884, when he sold this property, through an intermediary, to Julia H. H. Harwood, widow, of Marion.⁶ This may be the moment when this building reverted solely to use as dwelling.

Julia Harwood settled here following the death of her husband, Franklin Harwood, in 1883. Franklin Harwood was born in Rhode Island and Julia (Hunter) in Maryland. They married in Washington, DC in 1861, and lived in Buffalo and then Detroit, where he worked as an engineer.⁷ It is unclear how Julia Harwood came to choose Marion for her later years. She died in 1903, and that same year T. T. Hunter Harwood of Rockport, MA sold this property for a nominal sum to Margaret McIlvaine French.⁸ In the prior 1900 Census, Margaret French (1860-1935) had been listed as a boarder in Julia's house, along with Julia's daughter, Sarah W., and son, Julian. In the 1910, 1920, and 1930 census records, Sarah W. Harwood was still living here with Margaret French, and was listed alternately as partner, housemate, and boarder.⁹ Margaret French was working as a private tutor. After her death, this house was sold in 1937 to Maud Knowlton Smith of Marion.¹⁰ The property has changed hands numerous times since then.

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

Maps and Atlases:

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

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

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

1908, *Sanborn Fire Insurance Map from Marion, Plymouth County, Massachusetts*. New York: Sanborn Map Company, 1908.

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

Ancestry.com – Vital records.

Dempsey, Claire. MHC Area Form AA, Main Street, 2021.

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

³ PCRD, Book 60/ Page 80.

⁴ PCRD, Book 360/ Page 1.

⁵ PCRD, Book 447/ Page 79.

⁶ PCRD, Book 509/ Page 254.

⁷ SHS's Wharf Village Walking Tour speculates that Franklin Harwood may have been the first rector at St. Gabriel's, but that does not appear to be correct.

⁸ PCRD, Book 880/ Page 37.

⁹ This researcher has never seen someone described as "housemate" or "partner" in Census records before.

¹⁰ PCRD, Book 1723/ Page 427.

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Area(s) Form No.

N, AA

MRN.221

Plymouth County Registry of Deeds

Sippican Historical Society Collections.

Somers, Olive Hiller. *Three Centuries of Marion Houses*. Marion: Sippican Historical Society, 1972.

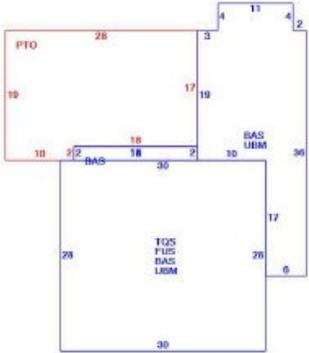


Figure 1. Assessor Sketch (decks, porches in red).

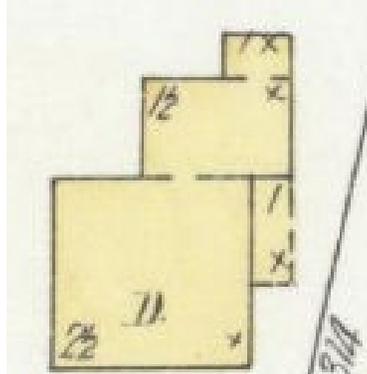


Figure 2. Detail of 1908 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map.



Photo 2. View from Main Street, looking northwest.



Photo 3. View looking southwest.



Photo 4. Undated view, looking northeast (Source: SHS 2004.019.084).

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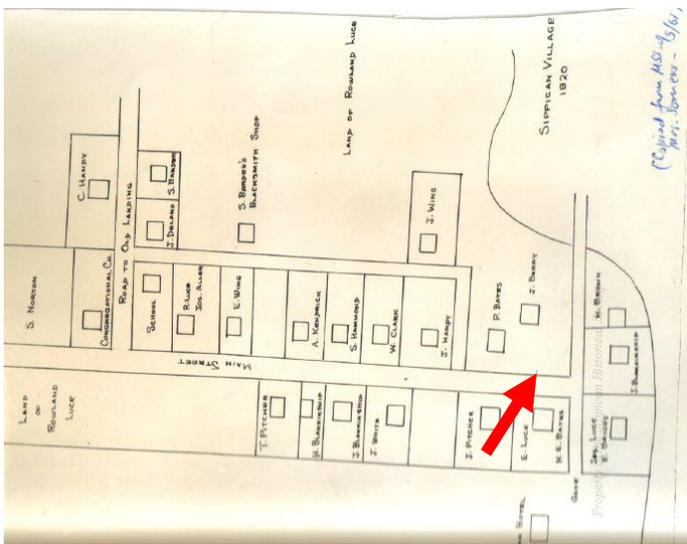


Figure 3. "Marion Main Street (Sippican Village) 1820" diagram, prepared by Olive Hiller Somers (arrow added) (Source: SHS 2006.010.001).



Figure 4. 1855 Walling Map of Marion, Sippican Village Inset Map.



Figure 5. Detail of 1855 Inset Map (arrow added).



Figure 6. Detail of 1879 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).