

# FORM B – BUILDING

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

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

16 91	Marion	N, AA	MRN.239
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**Town/City:** MARION

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

## Photograph



**Address:** 32 Main Street

**Historic Name:** Caleb Handy House

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

Original: Single Family Dwelling House

**Date of Construction:** [1820-1833]

**Source:** Vital records (marriage date, 1830 US Census)

**Style/Form:** Federal

**Architect/Builder:** Unknown

**Exterior Material:**

Foundation: Granite

Wall/Trim: Wood shingles/ Wood

Roof: Asphalt shingles

**Outbuildings/Secondary Structures:**

Outbuilding, unknown use, behind house (pre-1903)

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

Attached garage (2017)

\*Based on Property Card and/or observation

**Condition:** Good

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

**Acreage:** 0.19 acres

**Setting:** The surrounding area includes historic houses sited relatively close to the street and to each other along Main Street, and the Congregational Church to the east. The main block of this house is set very close to the street. The front yard is landscaped with a picket fence and foundation plantings. A driveway of stone pavers leads to an ell with a modern garage addition set back from the street.

## 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

32 MAIN STREET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

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Area(s) Form No.

N, AA

MRN.239

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 two-story, Federal-style house has a form that is sometimes referred to as a Half House, meaning it is a three-bay wide version of the larger five-bay Federal house with centered entrance, see e.g. 25 Main Street (MRN.235). It can also be thought of as the two-story equivalent of a Half Cape vs. a Full Cape. 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.

This house, like most 19<sup>th</sup> century Marion Village houses, rests on a granite block foundation. The elevations are clad in wood shingles with plain cornerboards. The roof is clad in asphalt shingles (wood shingles originally). The windows are modern, replacement 6/6 double-hung sash set in frames with splayed lintels (the same design found across the street, but the frames are not projecting). The elegant front entrance is characteristic of the Federal style. The paneled door is set in a surround with pilasters (flat columns) and a broad lintel above.

As can be seen on the 1855 Map of Marion (Figure 6), the building had a rear ell. Sometime between the 1908 and 1933 Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps, a second rear ell was added (Figures 1, 2), but that second ell appears to have since been removed (Figure 3). Later additions include the one-story addition on the right side connecting to a two-bay garage.

There is a one-story, gable-roofed outbuilding behind the rear ell that what is place by at least ca. 1900.

## 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, including this house (Figure 5).

A study map of ownership along Main Street as of 1820, prepared by Olive Hiller Somers, shows that the west side of Main Street in this location, and extending farther to the west, was owned by Rowland Luce (Figure 4). Rowland Luce's own house is shown on that study (25 Main Street, MRN.235). Tisbury-born 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.<sup>2</sup> Rowland and Elizabeth Luce and their descendants would go on to have a great impact on the development of the village.

Deed research for this house goes back to an 1833 deed where Caleb Handy sold this property, with reference to a house that was 4' from the east property line.<sup>3</sup> That would track with the siting of this house. Unfortunately no deed has been found wherein Handy purchased this land, but it almost certainly would have been from Rowland Luce or an intermediary. What we can surmise

<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 60/ Page 80.

<sup>3</sup> PCRD, Book 179/ Page 105.

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is that the house was built sometime after 1820 (based on Somers' study map) and before the sale in 1833. Caleb Handy (1782-1855) married Sophia Dexter (1790-1813). Caleb was listed as a yeoman (farmer) in deeds, and the 1850 US Census (the first to list occupations), also listed him as a farmer. Sophia (Dexter) Handy died in 1813 at the age of 23, and Caleb remarried in 1815 to Polly Dexter (1797-1881) (not a sister, possibly a cousin of Sophia). Caleb had one son with Sophia, and ten children with Polly.

Caleb Handy sold this house in 1833 to Charles B. Hammond (1802-1857), and his name is shown on the 1855 Walling Map of Marion (Figure 6). Charles Hammond (1802-1857) was born in Maine and married Chatham-born Ruth Nickerson (1801-1873) on Nantucket in 1825. By the time the 1830 US Census was prepared, they were living in Marion with two of their eventual four children. The 1850 US Census was the first to enumerate professions. By that time, they were living here with all four of their children, and he was listed as "sailor – water transportation." His grave marker refers to him as a sea captain, so at some point he had risen to master mariner.

This house is shown on the 1879 and 1903 Plymouth County Atlas maps with the name "C. A. Hammond." This refers to Charles and Ruth's youngest son, Charles Allen Hammond (1838-1912). He was living here with his mother as of 1860, the year he married Sandwich-born Ellen Chadwick (1841-1928) in Mansfield, MA. His career path was indicative of the decline of maritime industrial economy. He was listed as a mariner in the 1860, 1870 and 1880 census records, but starting in the 1900 Census was listed as a day laborer, and in 1910 employed by the town as a stone mason. Following Ellen Hammond's death in 1928, her heirs sold this house out of the Hammond family.<sup>4</sup>

The house was sold to James R. C. Rogers (1886-1966) of Marion. He worked in a hardware store (1930, 1940 Census) and then night watchman at a private academy (1950 Census, likely Tabor). He and his wife, Charlotte (Newell) did not have any children. They sold this house in 1946 to Charles B. Hathaway and Fred L. Cobb as joint tenants. Both Charles (1880-1962) and Fred (1885-1978) lived elsewhere in Marion with their wives in the 1930 and 1940 Census. They were owners for a time of the Marion General Store at 140 Front Street (MRN.22). Perhaps they bought this property to house employees. They had also purchased 31 Main Street (MRN.238) in 1929. They sold both houses in 1948; they sold this house to Miriam and Charles E. Woodcock, Jr. of Marion.<sup>5</sup> Charles Woodcock (d. 1986), was a member of the Board of Assessors, GOP Committeeman, and president of the Eames and Woodcock Insurance Agency. The house remains in the Woodcock family.

## 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.

Plymouth County Registry of Deeds

Sippican Historical Society Collections.

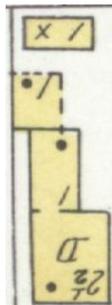


Figure 1. 1908 Sanborn Map.

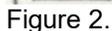


Figure 2. 1933 Sanborn Map.

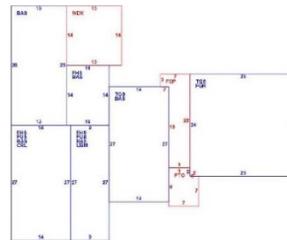


Figure 3. Marion Assessor Sketch (decks, porches in red).

<sup>4</sup> PCRD, Book 1707/ Page 324.

<sup>5</sup> PCRD, Book 1883/ Page 414.

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Photo 2. View from Main Street, looking southeast.

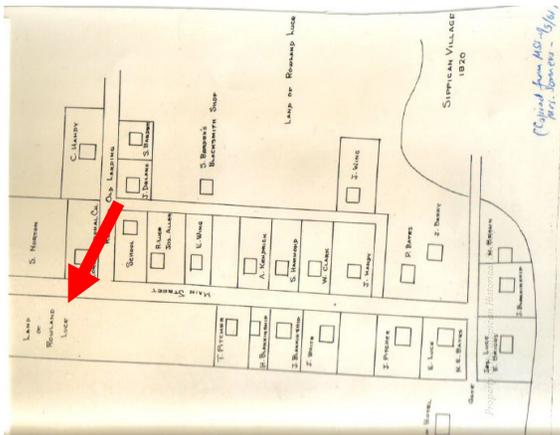


Figure 4. "Marion Main Street (Sippican Village) 1820 diagram, prepared by Olive Hiller Somers (arrow added) (Source: SHS 2006.010.001).



Figure 5. 1855 Walling Map of Marion, Sippican Village Inset Map.



Figure 6. Detail of 1855 Walling Map (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-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).